



**THE BATTLE OF
GETTYSBURG
AND OTHER POEMS**

BY THOMAS A.T. HANNA



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The
Battle of Gettysburg
and Other Poems

BY
Thomas A. T. Hanna



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CONTENTS

THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG

	Page
"The Book of the Wars of the Lord"	1
The Battle Dawn	3
Appeal to the Bards of Old	5
"The Irrepressible Conflict"	8
Prolog of Freedom's Martyrs	10
"Forward, March!"	13
The Eve of Battle	15
Pickett's Final Charge	18
Not There	24
General Meade	24
Burial	26
To Gettysburg	30
Their Monument	32
The Pæan	34
The Song of Africa	36
Divine Praise from Human Wrath	40

NATIONAL THEMES

A Revolution Backward	45
A Centennial Ode	49
Ad Magnam Britanniam	52
Which England Art Thou Now?	54

UNFULFILLED RENOWN

An Unfulfilled Renown	59
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ANNALS OF THE POOR

Parody on a Popular Ballad	75
The Loss of a Fortune	77
The Wee Thing Sma'	79
At Richard Cameron's Grave	82
Rachel's Death Near Bethlehem	84
"Thou Hast Gained Thy Brother"	86
Alone in Ocean	89
Stabat Mater	91

NATURAL MUSIC

The Coming of Evening	95
"Sunt Quos Juvat"	97
A Dichordon	99
A Monochord	100
On Long Island Sound	101

Craig Varra	102
The Spy's Passage Over the Alps	103
Summer Days	106
Bold Robin	107
Thrice Fair	108

PICTURES FROM GREEK URNS

Medea	113
Iphigenia	115
Her Death Song	118
Andromache	119
Eos	121
A Fragment from Æschylus	122
Persephone	123
Shield-Bearing—Shield-Borne	125
The Flash of the Fall of Troy	126
First Chorus of the Agamemnon of Æschylus	127

HORTUS MORTIS

In the Garden, a Tomb	137
For Ever	143
The Lost Star	144
The Two Memnons	146
The Chambered Pyramid	147
Time the Iconoclast	149
Vale-Vale-Vale	151

MINOR CHORDS

The World-Pain	155
The Valley	157
Succession	158
Repression	160
Memory Faithful to Sorrow	161
To the Memory of Edgar Allan Poe	164

DEATH AND FAITH

To a New Singer in Heaven's Choir	167
The Flight of the Golden Wings	169
The Oldest Mystery	170
In Dromore Churchyard	172
After Many Days	174
To K. M. M.	176

SATIRE

Wanted—A Pastor	181
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THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG

The Battle of Gettysburg and Other Poems

"THE BOOK OF THE WARS OF THE LORD."

Of that great fight of brothers and of men,
The champions of the right or of the wrong,
Fought on the sylvan hills of peaceful Penn,
Thou God of providence, assist the song.
Such fight as never on earth again may be,
Till mountains crush into the winevat sea.

The day has come, the nation's earthquake day;
Its day of drums and trumpets and alarms,
When Right, through Anguish, cleaves her crimson
way,
Nor law is heard, but that which pleads with
arms;
Where man's last argument with man is heard,
And cannons speak the arbitrating word.

The Battle of Gettysburg

Where are the bells, this great day to acclaim?

Doubt not but ye shall hear them when they
sound;

Their tongue is thunderbolt, and forked with
flame,

And when they speak, who shall be heedless
found?

O man, this is the triple sounding bell

That's heard in heaven—heard, too, in earth and
hell.

How many, O inexorable sun,

Dost thou awake to meet the doomful day?

Eternity shall end the day, begun

In time; then let them dream while yet they
may;

Canst thou not let them sleep a little o'er,

Who, when they sleep again, shall wake no more?

To-day, to-morrow, thou mayst wake them, sun;

But the day following, ah, who shall hear?

They lie like Memnon in the desert lone,

Responding not unto thy summons clear.

Thou spreadst the morning on the mountains—but

Their inward eyes to all that glow are shut.

The Orphean voice, the Orphean lyre, were thine,

In those old fables that we loved so well;

Thine was the monochord of mountain-pine,

And Triton-music from his ocean-shell;

Thine was the twanging of the Memnon string,

Welcome from earth-born unto heaven-born King.

Tarry, O punctual sun, behold thy face
Within the wrinkled mirror of the sea;
Urge not thine indefatigable race;
Sure, the rent nation calleth not for thee.
Too brief, too brief, hath been the summer's night,
Too soon, too soon, must dawn the battle-light.

But from of old hath been ordained this day—
From the great deeps two ocean-tides must come;
The dark-blue wave must meet the solemn grey,
And all the line must burst in bloody foam—
Sun, stand not still, but roll thy burnish'd wheel
Along the firmament of furbish'd steel.

THE BATTLE DAWN.

The rosy dawn from o'er the wakeful sea,
Breathes on the waking land her fragrant breath,
And stirs a whisper in each silent tree;
Her garments shine on destin'd hills of death;
Her silver coronet of morning star
Sheds a faint glory on the fields of war.

Rise o'er the Appalachian ranges, drawn
From God's unfathomable sea of light,
Rise, springing fount of the mid-summer dawn;
Reveal thy sky of azure, barr'd with white,
Sweet, grand emblazonry of God alone,
A shield that vails his too-resplendent throne.

Rise o'er the hills, thou day-spring from on high,
And from the cold Laurentian heights far north,
To where the long, rude mountain bastions die,
And Alabama's generous stream goes forth,
A river from the dying mountain born,—
There spread thy glory, thou Æonian morn!

The Battle of Gettysburg

This mountain barrier, on its seaward flank,
Is first to meet the couriers of the day—
The sun, just now, on Sinim's myriads sank,
Leaving the stars to rule that strange Cathay,
Now, center'd on the ribb'd Atlantic floor,
Extends dim radiance to our dawning shore.

New Hampshire's mountains, scarcely freed from
snow,
And, purple-dawning, green hills of Vermont,
Then the cold Adirondacks take the glow;
And Hudson sees the Catskills' bastion-front
Change into mighty mounds of greenery;
Sees, but halts not his march unto the sea.

Now Shawangunk receives the stream of light,
Pour'd from the Ogygian fountains of the dawn,
And broad Pocono, from the mists of night,
Uplifts his shoulders like a giant's brawn;
And soon, Wyoming's vale, grow greener thou
Than Arcady or land of golden bough!

The morning watcher on thy height, Penn-Mar,
Sees that first miracle—"Let there be light!"
Sweep from the tide to Alleghanies' bar;
To him the Virgin-land and Penn's unite;
And Akel-dama, forty miles away,
Not red as yet, but only dim and gray.

From northeast to southwest, in Titan curve,
Illumes the sun the Appalachian line,
Across the state its giant arc doth swerve,
A deep-indented but unbroken spine.
A great tenth-wave of earth, arrested, still—
And back'd by many a long and waving hill.

And southward, westward still th' Eoän skies
With mingling of rose cloud and violet filled,
To where Virginia's Peaks of Otter rise,
Two noble pillars for the sun to gild—
The Smoky Mountains vail in gloom their crest,
To nurse the Tennessee from cloudy breast.

APPEAL TO THE BARDS OF OLD.

But who this epos red and loud shall tell?
Sing, thou blind harper of the muses' dawn!
The wage of battle thou hast chanted well,
When cities or when beauties lay in pawn.
Great captains here shall play a greater game
Than what thou didst reward with amarant fame.

Or Æschylus, thou man of Marathon;
Thy seven chiefs at Thebes are unforgot,
Yet clash thy triremes, yet thy Persians groan;
Loud time thy clanging shields can silence not;
Thou art a battle singer, sing me this,
Sublime as Marathon or Salamis.

Resounding Mantuan, thy hexameters
Go marching on, and fall not back from time;
Of all the wars that peal in mortal verse,
Arms and the man have found no nobler rhyme.
Frame then for Gettysburg thy famous chords,
And roll again thine ocean-sounding words.

The Battle of Gettysburg

Or thou, the lyrist of Olympian games,
Whose fiery odes have crowned, for lasting days,
With laurel and with song the haughty names
That cared for nothing but Hellenic praise:
Oh, here's a game shall greater guerdon bring
Than thine, though sought by many a distant King.

O Pindar! were there but one singer now
Would sing this song commensurately grand,
As far superior to thine, as thou
Art nobler than thine athletes on the sand—
Then—then had been a fit antiphonal
To Homer and the ancient chorus all.

In Athens, at the acme of her glory,
Echoes of Marathon still in her ears,
Herodotus read out the mighty story,
And young Thukydides was found in tears—
Prophetic sorrow, and beseemed him well,
Who Athens' tale of ruin lived to tell.

We read: In joy for that sea-fight Ægean,
O Sophokles, that thou didst dance and sing;
But why no ode from thee, no clanging pæan,
In hearts of men through all the years to ring?
To praise Themistokles, and Athens' fleet,
Thy pen were surely nobler than thy feet.

Dante, grim searcher of abysmal gloom,
Life moribund that sought the lively dead,
Descending the concentric pits of doom,—
Sing for us this great history instead;
Let this high task thy solemn spirit move,
Dread as thy dreams, and real as thy love.

Ah, great of old! ye will not sing this war;
Yours was the thunder-chant that rolls away;
Sounds of the sea, from which we travel far,
Or morning music, silent in the day.
Ye are but echoes, through Time's mountains
borne,
In music dying like the Alpine horn.

Take, then, the mighty harp, ye feeble hands,
And, trembling, strike the long untroubled
strings.

The battle-sounds from those dim times and lands
Ye cannot wake—nor notes that ravished Kings;
Arion's harp ye may not think to play,
Which tranced the dolphins on the ocean-way.

Lost is the might that bent Odysseus' bow,
Dumb is Amphion's lyre; dull, Hector's lance.
The voiceless trump of Roland who shall blow?
That pealed from Roncesvalles down to France?
Never, on any sea, the Sirens' strain
Shall thrill the spray-wet mariners again.

Nor Argive fleet shall wait the parting gasp
Of Agamemnon's daughter on the shore;
Nor sweet Alcestis linger in the clasp
Of that lone husband, ever, ever, more;
Nor stern Electra, o'er her brother's urn,
Wail as for him that never could return.

E'en nightingales sing not so sweetly now
As when they sang Kolonos' boughs among;
Where Oidipous uplifted sightless brow,
And leaned upon those daughters sweet and
strong—

And can we find no Attic nightingale,
To sing in summer woods this grander tale?

The Battle of Gettysburg

"THE IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT."

'As one who dreads he hath a hidden cancer
Would hide it, if he could, from his own soul,
'And dares not press the question to an answer,
And fears to learn if he be sick or whole;
So have ye tried the black wound to conceal,
Till God hath probed it with un pitying steel.

Down in the Ocean's sunless, stormless hold,
The horrid secret chamber of the world,
Where sleeps Leviathan or Kraken old,
Around the roots of unseen mountains curled:
Let him sleep on! Who is so fierce, to dare
'Arouse the silent monster from his lair?

So, men would keep the woful question hush'd,
And chide if any dared to breathe it much;
While weeping, singing, praying, toiling, crush'd
Slaves waited God's own liberating touch;
Prayed—while the God of providence conceals
Himself amid the burning wheels in wheels.

'Arouse thee, giant-question, Samson-truth!
The world shall learn thou hast angelic might;
He that hath armed thee, knows nor change, nor
ruth;

Thy lowly weapons win the heavenly fight;
Tear thou the gates of Gaza from their hold,
'And thus the everlasting doors unfold!

Thou breathest joyful in the powder-stench,
Thou seest the way, straight through the battle-
cloud;

Thy voice is like Pelides' at the trench;
The thunder of the captains, if more loud
Than heaven's own, is harmony divine
To thee, more sweet than all the rhythmic Nine.

Ye hushed that question on Delilah's knees,
Ye made it sleep on lap of Compromise;
Ye frayed the gnats that would have stung its ease,
And drugged it with your diplomatic lies.
But hark! God's voice! the Samson-question wakes,
And at its earthquake-stamp the people shakes.

The sword of doom hath hung above your feast,
And once again is filled the heavenly word,
That not the warrior only, but the priest,
Must sell his garment and must buy his sword.
Too long with God the dark account hath stood,
A score which he will now expunge with blood.

The great sweet waters that no dam can stanch,
In the broad continental bosom born,
Plunge white and swift and strong (as avalanche
From Monte Rosa or from Matterhorn)
The cloud, the foam, the rainbow and the fall,
With everlasting thunder over all.

The foaming rapids, on their awful slide,
The bellow of the green-white mass that falls,
The deadly swirling pools below, that glide
Between the riven geologic walls;
The anguish'd waters, wild for want of home,
Eternal thunder—everlasting foam!

So this is no slow landslide, which at first
With stanching timbers might have been made
good;
But Krakatoä or Pélée, that burst
And hurled a massy mountain in the flood.
The treach'rous earth, like Judas, rived in twain,
An Akeldama on the reddening main.

The Battle of Gettysburg

PROLOG OF FREEDOM'S MARTYRS.

Whose tomb has lasted through all empires'
change?

That savage victor's, whose immortal hate
Wreaked on his victim vengeance foul and strange.

Oblivion cannot blot his name; nor fate
Abridge his fame—conspicuous far around
The ancient glory of Achilles' mound.

The conquerors are they that fill the aisle
Of Time's gray minster, and their chariot-march
Reverberates along the storied pile;

The faded banners, hung from every arch
Stir at their trumpet-blazon—and the crowd,
"Io, triumphe!" is their rolling anthem proud.

The joy of conflict! Of what art thou made,

O man, to find thy most entrancing joy

In practicing this most infernal trade?

Hast thou not changed since Hector died for
Troy?

Is yet the gladdest song of humans, that

They raise when trampling in the human vat?

And is it true, earth has no grander scene

To spread beneath the sunlight, or God's eye;

A hundred thousand homicides convene,

With more of glory by the more that die:

Earth's highest fame is writ in lines of red,

And living glory built on heaps of dead.

If man must fight, if man by steel must die,

If man must hurl God's bolts at fellowman,

Grant him at least, an object meet and high;

and Other Poems

Let him discern he serves the ancient Plan
Of Him, who marches his unhinder'd way
Through blood and tears, life, death, and night and
day.

The valiant dead of every age and land,
Soldiers of Liberty, behind her shield,
Who sprang to grapple death at her command,
And made their glory haunt the stricken field—
Can that great shield be broken in the strife?
And liberty with them give up her life?

I mind me of a grim sarcophagus,
In which defeated warrior found his home,
Whereon the sculptor had engraven thus
His faith that triumph from defeat should come;
A bronze arm, starting from those cerements hid,
Groped for the sword upon the stony lid.

As in that fierce mellay of Hun and Goth,
Fought in the Catalaunian vale, when they
Who died in battle, rose at midnight, wroth;
Gripped spirit arms and armor, for the fray;
A vast and shadowy, an infernal band,
Whose battle-rage death could not countermand.

So ye, dead champions of freedom, rise,
Be ye immortal till the work is done;
Where'er the down-trod dare the grand emprise,
There let the ancient combat thunder on;
For, those who march with freedom's guiding star
May lose a battle, but not lose the war.

O Justice, hast thou, as men think, weak hands?
Yet Pride and Hate, twin dragons, shall not slip;
Their necks shall know thy fingers as steel bands,

The Battle of Gettysburg

And writhe in thine inexorable grip;
For wrestling Justice, in the heavenly Plan,
Hath God for Umpire—yea, for partisan!

Come to the land of heroes; let us dream
We've found some clear Walhalla of the brave,
Where Maccabæus stands in glory's gleam,
Or stern Leonidas, who died to save;
Here's blond Arminius, who, stroke on stroke,
Hewed Varus' legions like the woodman's oak.

Rienzi, of the empire fallen—advance!
Llewellyn from the old Silurian height,
And that bright girl that crowned the King of
France,
With Albin's champion, the Wallace-wight;
Or fierce Bozzaris, and his Klephts are seen,
And Andrew Hofer of the Engadine.

Ye are the noble army! who have fought
That none might dominate your fatherland;
And though ye failed in that for which ye wrought,
Yet doth your work to-day immortal stand.
Now, to your circle of the palm and crown,
I introduce our mutual friend, John Brown!

John Brown of Torrington, born pioneer;
John Brown o' th' Adirondacks, visionary;
John Brown of Ossawattomie, the seer;
John Brown, first fruits of death at Harper's
Ferry;
One of those Great-heart Johns, as stiff as steel,
Who ne'er would turn his toe where was his heel.

Well him, 'tween battles, on the bridge of night,
They sang; uprose the giant shadows then;
His sons, protagonists in Freedom's fight,

and Other Poems

Forerunners they, of Lincoln and his men.
And while the waving smoke and sparkles soared,
"His soul is marching on"—a thousand roared.

Old history has many a glorious John.

John Baptist, brave, the leader of the throng;
Then he that leaned the holiest breast upon;
And John, whose surname was the Golden-tongue;
Huss, Bradford, Wyclif, Knox, upheld the name,
Gave God the glory, and endured the shame.

"FORWARD, MARCH!"

O little heart of man, sublimely bold,
Who marchest to the battle-gulf of fire,
Earth-born and moribund, the ancient Cold
How soon resumes the spark of thy desire?
As fiery rivers, from Vesuvius' cone,
Soon, by the waiting sea, are chilled to stone.

But when high human right anear the brink
Is toppling, and strong hands are raised to urge
It headlong—then, ye men of Israel, shrink,
Retreat, recoil not from the bloody verge.
May not a million meet the mortal spasm,
To make God's highway o'er the bloody chasm?

The steeds of Providence are red and lowering,
With clouds and darkness round about his car;
But in the zenith love divine is towering,
Fair as the morning or the evening star:
Not hours, but ages, in their destined grooves,
Roll onward, to attend him as he moves.

The Battle of Gettysburg

Its anthem be the continental storm,
That bends a thousand forests as it blows;
That twangs *crescendo* on each mountain-form,
And tingles on the Rocky Mountain snows;
That prophesies a glory out of pain,
And sings: "Io, triumphe," for the slain.

March on—your crowning glory ye shall wrest in a
Close grapple from the iron hands of death;
Move in the marble line hewn out of destiny,
And to the God of battles trust your breath:
Ye march like Israel, through a crimson sea,
From land of bondmen into land of free.

March on, earth-shaking, but forget not him
Who died; to liberate the souls of men
Died; but beyond all spheres and ether dim
Is throned, as God, but merciful as then—
Lift up your eyes above that shining arch,
Soldiers! remember Him, and Forward, March!

March on with drums—to death; as when the
crimes
Of Spanish Fury swept the streets below,
Far up the Antwerp-spire, were heard the chimes
Soft as the tinkling woodland-waters' flow:
Four times an hour the dulcet carillon
Warbles, while death and horror thunder on.

March on; for that dear heaven o'er-arching
Knows from of old what trumpet-music means;
When angel-armies, fiery-arm'd, were marching,
Embattled in eternal peaceful scenes;
Saint Michael and all angels in array;
May ye not serve the Infinite, as they?

THE EVE OF BATTLE.

"We greet thee, Cæsar, on our way to death,"
So said the gladiator-band at Rome;
But on the eve of battle, soldier's breath
Goes forth in sighing for the loved at home:
O father, mother, little sister, now,
If ever ye would pray, make haste to bow.

And on the bivouac: "Be still, boys, hark,
Do ye not hear the sound of mooing kine?
It is the 'tween-light of the day and dark,
The hour, in that York-midland home of mine,
The cows come pouring sweet breath up the lane;
I wonder if I'll drink their milk again?"

And over the fast-glooming fields there comes,
Made musical by distance, cry of hound;
And they lie wakeful (who can sleep in drums
And bugles) just to hear the homely sound.
For never seems our home so far away
As on the even of the battle-day.

"It was the hour when fond desires move
The mariners, and tender grows the heart;
For they have said, Farewell, to whom they love:
For then must Love's new-exiled pilgrim start
And thrill—at sound of bell from some far bourne,
When seems the dying day its death to mourn."

So sang the iron-featured Florentine,
Whom Florence loved, and hated, and exiled;
Oh, how he loved the dawn, on waters seen,
And the soft footsteps of the evening mild.
Majestic soul; at home among the stars;
But we must leave him, and come down to wars.

The Battle of Gettysburg

'Tis golden middle of the summer now,
When earth is pregnant with the fruits to be.
Green leaves, prophetic of the golden bough,
And fields, as creamy as the moonlit sea—
One silent harvester awaits the morn,
When he shall reap,—and men will be his corn.

Now, as the western glory fails and dims,
Some hearts would breathe, "Lord, teach us how
to pray,"
Æolian memory whispers the dear hymns
Left on the heart-strings from an earlier day.
List, as the evening grows more dark and still,
The trine staccato of the whippoorwill.

Thou dost not weep, thou red-cheek'd subaltern;
No, but dost grind thy teeth to stay the tears;
In mind thou seest thy father, strong and stern;
Thy mother's face, love-aureoled, appears.
Sore was that mother's sob, that father's sigh,
When thou didst rush from them with light "Good-
bye."

And who is he, immersed in wakeful dream,
His face irradiate with the sun's last rim?
Ask who is she, beside Chenango's stream,
Whose soul is busy still with thoughts of him,
With trembling eyelids there, and trembling mouth,
She walks alone, to turn her vision south.

And, as two bees may meet on one red flower,
His memory and hers are draining bliss
From soft rehearsals of that parting hour,
When lips quarternion framed a single kiss.
From that one kiss how many more were born,
Till the broad bosom from the soft was torn?

Sweetest and costliest of the fruits of earth,
But oft, ah, growing on forbidden tree:
Too rich for memory, too sweet for mirth,
The touch of lips which, glad, together flee.
More generous far than apple or than rose,
Where one such kiss is plucked, another grows.

Too soon to be forever parted, breath
Now mingles in the dear salute of love;
Sweet foretaste of the bitterness of death,
When melting hearts and lips together move.
Kisses that sank deep in the memory,
Like pearls beneath a dim-green eastern sea.

Like birds that sang before the tempest fell,
While half the forest gloomed beneath the cloud,
But disappeared, ah, who can whither tell,
When the tornado through the forest plowed?
But these, or other birds, at other whiles,
Shall chant again, in those green-vaulted aisles.

Kisses of parting, deep, and still, and sweet,
Must all that sweetness perish in a day?
Are they so evanescent, they so fleet,
And must their thrilling impress pass away;
Those seals of memory, pressed upon the heart,
Through joined lips, that were so loath to part?

Till Death, till Death shall part them; hateful
Death,
(Who hath a spite at lovers) from his throne,
Breathes on their lips with his Septentrion breath,
And turns those eager lips to silent stone:
And one twin-heart turns rigid at his chill;
And one is broken, but is beating still.

The Battle of Gettysburg

In fault or fold of strata is no pain,
Although an hundred layers be upborne,
And the deep cañon seams the western plain;
But when a heart from heart is reft and torn,
The cleft is deeper and the wound is more,
For man's heart still is deeper than earth's core.

PICKETT'S FINAL CHARGE.

Yes, far in heaven, ye trailing summer clouds,
(White ships that drift upon an azure sea),
Clouds loftier and more fair than this which
shrouds

With smoke and noxious mist the summer lea—
Sweet, beautiful and voiceless heavens, ah, why
May not the earth be peaceful as the sky?

For now there is Sabbatic peace in heaven,
Whence warring angels are forever fled;
But here on earth no day, of all the seven,
But is profaned by quick, defiled by dead.
And if, on previous days, the war might languish,
This day shall be one fierce unbroken anguish.

Like the slow clanging of a midnight bell,
Some syllables of thunder from the guns
Athwart the dreadful midday silence fell—
Till swift white flame o'er all the batteries runs:
Then shook the mountain-side, below, above,
Like vast Olympus at the bolts of Jove.

Now all the dogs of war are slipt at last ;

They see, or think they see, their prey at large.
Nay, leave these tropes. What is this movement
vast?

This is fierce Pickett, his tremendous charge—
Th' accelerated booms, that stun the vault,
Are signal bells, to launch the grand assault.

See now, the hills loom dreadful in the smoke,

While batteries belch their mutual horrors forth ;
Each crash, like splitting of a pine or oak,

Each bolt, Death's angel to the South or North.
Swift, as from cloud to cloud, they went and came ;
Titanic thunders and Typhoän flame.

The long, grey wave is flowing o'er the valley—

Valley of death-shade to that sun-bright host—
With shriek of wounded and with shout of rally,

With dead that drop ere half the vale be crost.
Where is th' eclipse that will o'er-vail the scene,
And roll, these shuddering, sulphurous hills be-
tween?

A live Niagara of wrath and force.

But rolling upward, glistening-grey, compact ;
Rocks, trees, or fences, swayed or stayed its course

A-twinkling, then swept on the cataract ;
While bomb and bullet, as God's thunderstorm,
Smote the grey line which they could not deform.

Or shall we say 'twas as a tidal wave

Heaved up from the pelagic, oozy floor,
Which distant and subaqueous earthquake drave

On Fujiyama's or on Andes' shore?
Where far up inland vales, the ocean hurled
The squander'd treasures of a deep-sea world.

The Battle of Gettysburg

Or, as long-scatter'd range of briny rock,
The guardian outpost of the moaning shore,
That meets the yet unbroken ocean's shock,
And hides itself amid the foam and roar;
Then lifts its hog-backs from the passing flood,
And, dripping, stands where it has always stood.

Or northward, where the yearly giant tides
March in broad squadrons up the Fundy bay;
White steeds of foam, whereon the storm-king
rides,
Ramp in the forefront of the sea's array;
Till the assault of all the swaying host
Shall burst at once on either rocky coast.

And o'er each sloping bench march inland far,
Where farmsteads hear the voice of the new sea;
A thousand ships lift, each its tilted spar,
And toss, and grind the anchors to be free;
And still the following sea, in white-capp'd rank,
Flings higher foam, opposed, on either flank.

Until that dryad stream, the lone Saint John,
Pours all his breadth of foam adown the steep,
And in tormented channel thunders on,
To meet the invasion of the charging deep:
When the sea smites the river, the impact
Hushes the bellowing of the cataract.

So moves the living, raging, bleeding wave,
Swollen so full of life, so near to death;
The breaker-line of twenty thousand brave,
Whose hold on life is but one struggling
breath.

On—up, where loom the batteries, stern and steep,
On—up—against the star-flag—on they sweep.

and Other Poems

Swift moved the line o'er the Phlegræan field,
But oh, more swift the bullet and the bomb;
At every step, some stricken hero reeled,
Groaned in the rank, and, staggering, fell there-
from:

But on—still on—the host, in tenser swarms,
Can spare no glance at all those level'd forms.

As summer wanderer in the matted brake,
With eyes unwonted to the woodland gloom,
Who hears, not heeds, faint clatter of the snake;
Can that small crackling noise portend his doom?
How could he know, that wanderer in the glade,
That Death, like baby, with such rattle played?

So seemed the rattle of the musketry,
Pattering along the terrible firing line;
Clattering, like hail on glazed greenery;
Tremendous Death should come with greater
sign:

See men ripe, unripe, with as little sound
As nuts or acorns, dropping to the ground.

Upon the eve of Scottish battle: "Spare,
O Lord, the green and take the ripe"—well-
pray'd

Was this, the warrior-covenanter's prayer;
Here saved and lost together fall; the blade
Of war's scythe-bearing chariot hath spread
The fields with swath of indiscriminate dead.

Each old-world tribe that builds America
Here makes libation—pours its stint of blood;
Amid the war-smoke and the hoarse hurrah,
Beside Van Rensselaer, O'Tooley stood;

The Battle of Gettysburg

Smith, Swenstrom, Schmidt, DeCourcy, Jones, Mc-
Clurg,
Their blood together ran at Gettysburg.

Mark, near the hilltop, that grey, rude, stone fence;
Of ten republics, there, the gathered strength
Climbed to its acme, wavered, and rolled thence;
Rolled backward, all along its bloody length.
A flood that bore disaster on its swell,
And ruin,—oh, what ruin—when it fell.

At the flood-tide of this tremendous charge,
Its highest undulation marks its doom;
The living sea meets its predestined marge:
“Lo, hither, and no further shalt thou come.”
Back from the rampart of the low stone wall
The climbing, foaming, raving waters fall.

Hast thou beheld, on hillsides fair and far;
Far inland from the noise of any sea,
The channel'd hollows and the lines that scar
The stony outcrop of the daisied lea?
Thou sayest: “Here, in æons hard to tell,
Some now lost sea or ocean rose and fell.”

Or, as some river, heir to mountain-flood,
Whose record on a column stands engraved—
Thou seest it meandering o'er its mud;
But round that column once it raced and raved.
Thou sayest: “The water climbed its highest there,
What time it swept the drownèd lowlands bare.”

Come, Death, advance thy livid, cloudy form,
And Slaughter, wave thy brand incarnadine;
On, Battle, roll thy chariot like a storm,

and Other Poems

Abreast this surging, gray, and seething line.
Surely, a cataract of foam shall boil,
When from the crest it turns in vast recoil.

Death hisses, now, in unseen bullets' hum,
Death thunders from the cannon's brimstone
mouth;

Death bursts from out the detonating bomb,
Death fills the tortured air from north to south;
Death shouts amain in every powder-peal,
And Death waits dumb on points of silent steel.

But o'er that green arena, stained with red,
What eye can view the high consistory,
The cloud of witnesses, the quick and dead,
Unseen who see this day of history?
No brazen arms, nor panting trumpet's blare,
But trans-ethereal armies marshall'd there.

And Lee,—great marshal: now must be relinquished
Thy shining hope of final victory;
The star that led thy march is now extinguished,
Plunged in Oblivion's abysmal sea,
Like Hannibal turn'd back from gates of Rome,
Turn thou again unto thy sunward home.

Two years, beyond that bloody triduum,
That southern Paladin hath kept the field;
But ne'er again on northern hills his drum
Hath rumbled, nor his haughty clarion pealed.
Two years, like lion, ever front to foe,
He made his doom (inexorable) slow.

The Battle of Gettysburg

NOT THERE.

And Jackson—Stonewall Jackson—iron man:
Thy life reached not to this tremendous hour;
To right or left, in rearguard or in van,
Thy presence had been as a bastion'd tower:
Thou wouldst have smitten with the hand of Mars,
While Freedom perished in fraternal wars.

Not so was it ordained; the high command
Of Him who all predestines, gave to thee
The lion's heart, the eagle's eye, the hand
Gigantic; by his old profound decree;
But, in the same decree, 'twas fixed in heaven,
That Gettysburg to thee should ne'er be given.

So, May has passed, and rosy June has fled,
But thou shalt wake to no reveillé horn;
Two months ago, that midnight bullet sped
Which made the armies of the Southland mourn.
"Let us cross o'er the river," (last words these),
"And rest ourselves beneath the shady trees."

GENERAL MEADE.

Beside the woodland Schuylkill's pictur'd wave,
Begirt by myriads of urban dead,
There, traveler, thou canst find the emerald grave
Of him who that defensive army led;
While History's page shall blaze, and Memory
bleed,
Great people: ne'er forget the name of Meade.

and Other Poems

That fame which many are so swift to ask,
Was thrust on him; the crisis of his life
Found him prepared; girded for his great task.
He calmly, sadly, won the crucial strife;
Had one great task, and that was nobly done;
Had one sore fight, and that was sorely won.

Burden of eye and brain, of will and hand;
On him the Lord Omnipotent had hung
Long destinies of a more glorious land
Than Genghis conquered or than Tasso sung;
Land that can sound the pæan east and west,
Atlantic burden and Pacific rest.

Handful of dust, here lies the weary head
That throbbed with all the planning of the fight;
High-priest of war, between the quick and dead,
Who saw three days of darkness end in light.
A man just equal, and what if no more—
Equal to that tremendous load he bore,

Gone to the land of peace; delightsome land,
Where men learn war no more; land of the blest,
Where peaceful angels haunt the gleaming strand,
And welcome earthborn pilgrims to their rest.
This is the change ineffable—to pass
From earth's Red Sea unto the sea of glass,

This day, how much of history was made:
'Twill cause the pens of scribes unborn to fly;
This making history is a ghastly trade.
Ten thousand lightless faces watch the sky;
Ten thousand stars look down upon the slain,
Ten thousand angels mourn the crimes of men.

The Battle of Gettysburg

His victory was greater than we knew:
He was predestined not to faint nor fail;
For when the balance shook, Jehovah threw
His sword invisible into the scale.
Let not the victors shout, the vanquish'd weep,
His judgments are of old a mighty deep.

BURIAL.

The lonely aftermath of battle comes;
For now, the gleaners of Death's harvest must
With trailing arms, low flags, and muffled drums,
Lay ashes unto ashes, dust to dust;
And o'er the grave-heap fire the harmless shot;
Farewell to those who were, and who are not.

Farewell: The sound is like a miserère,
Wail'd by a wind that comes, we know not
whence;
But through the dark, harsh day hath swept the
dreary
Expanse of tarn or heath; until the dense
Cold fog is rolled up from the ocean-plain,
And the hush'd wind begins to weep in rain.

Here lift they one, his head with bullet torn—
Ah, mother, didst thou bear him but for this?
Those happy years, when, noon and night and
morn,
His lips, or babe or boy, were sweet to kiss:
Then, thou couldst snatch him joyous from the
floor,
'And now, he is a crimson load for four.

and Other Poems

And here is one whose supple limbs are gashed
And shattered; for too well the bomb-shard sped;
Dreadful, to see this God-built temple dashed
To ruin; softly now arrange that head;
Lay straight those faithful hands by the rent side;
This is the form that was a father's pride.

And there is one who in the battle-hour
Sat down, and leaned upon an upright stone,
And as an equal met the sombre power,
While round him lay the dead, supine or prone;
And in his hand is somewhat—come and see:
Here is a Silence that will speak to thee.

The cold hand holds before the sightless eyes
A pictured likeness of his children three;
So, gazing on those tender forms, he dies;
Last image on the glazing eyeballs—See:
Dear faces that made glad his cottage hearth
Beamed on him there, until the last of earth.

There sits he dead—three hundred miles away,
Where Alleghany rolls a slender flood,
Among the timber'd hills, ah, there are they,
The wailing mother and her wailing brood.
But here, at Gettysburg, the lethal pain
Was soothed by that last image on his brain.

That dark-rob'd searcher? From the neighbor-
farm
She seeks her own; her eyes are dread with all
Foretoken'd anguish of the battle-harm;
She finds him, folded in his country's pall.
One great look: then, with bursting heart, away;
To gaze no more upon that idol-clay.

The Battle of Gettysburg

See the brave beast, man's mighty warrior-friend,
Who shared the sweat of marching and the dint
Of battle: dim eyes, knees no more to bend;
Hoofs that drew lightning from the rock of
flint;
Those nostrils, gasping now, were trumpets then
To tell his joy among the ranks of men.

Scarce lifts he that great neck; but e'en this morn
That neck was clothed with thunder—from afar
He smelled the battle; challenged death with
scorn;
His deep flanks heaving in the joy of war.
Butchers of mercy: pass the human corse,
To end the anguish of the dying horse.

"When comes our father to our prairie-home,
Mother, who marched away with all the men?"
"O children, I am told he soon will come,
And soon will sit and play with us again,"
She said. But him the dark, rich earth shall hold,
Far o'er the hills, till she herself be cold.

Cold are the splendors of the constellations,
Whenas they spring from the sky-bosom forth;
Cold are the spear-vibrating coruscations,
In that strange, silent midnight of the north;
Heraldic Erebus adorns his shield
With lances argent, on a sable field.

Cold is the kiss that falls upon the brow
Still crown'd with beauty, but unmoved by
breath;
That kiss would once have waked a smile; but now,

and Other Poems

It falls like sunlight on the Arctic death;
Like rose-leaves falling on the frozen ground:
Sad kisses these, that wake nor smile nor sound.

But mournfullest of all the mourning this:

When one is buried who hath none to mourn;
Who from no dear embrace, no clinging kiss

Went forth to battle and the sable bourne.
Yes, the unlov'd can fight, the unlov'd can fall,
And the lone heart be rolled in glory's pall;

The emperor, amid his pillar'd Rome,

Wails: "Give me back my legions"—but in vain;
From dark Hercynian wood they cannot come;

The world's most skilful slayers there are slain.
But they who sent our armies, South or North,
Shriek not to call the buried heroes forth.

Yet some there were, who, number'd with the dead,

From moribund and mortal heap arose;
Whose lifted face, defiled with battle-red,

A resurrection seemed to friends and foes.
Ghostlier than dead or dying he is deemed
Who was not of death's number, but so seemed.

And must the grave become a battle-field,

See God's own acre, plow'd with shot and shell?
Here there are dead beneath the sod conceal'd;

Must dead be piled 'tween grass and sky as well?
Ev'n so, for Death's a tiger, and will slay
Beyond what he can swallow in a day.

For, as a miser, who of golden store

Hath gathered precious pieces, one by one,
And in dim chamber counts and gloats them o'er,

The Battle of Gettysburg

And guards the slowly-growing pile alone:
Then, sudden, is made rich beyond his dreams—
Some flooding of Pactolus' shining streams,

So, greedy Death, on Cemetery Hill,
Through summers and through winters, gathered
slow

His prizes costly, coveted; and still
Watched over them, in sunshine or in snow,
Till uncall'd Fortune swiftly came and passed,
Then, heaps on heaps, his treasures are amassed.

TO GETTYSBURG.

A home of verdant peace thy thorpe has been;
But that sweet history is past; thy name
Shall aye be heard, above the secular din,
Resounded by the brazen trump of fame.
But is it fame, or is it infamy,
O Gettysburg, these days confer on thee?

If that old sentence was indeed a curse:
"Dust art thou, and to dust shalt thou return,"
Then art thou not earth's better, but her worse;
What art thou, but an over-crowded urn?
If brother's blood from the red ground do cry,
How thou must din the Majesty on high?

The voiceless grandeur of an ancient fane
Broods o'er its dead, in crypt or coffin seal'd;
Silence, spread wings o'er Gettysburg again,
And hush the clamors of the weary field.
Here Freedom sank, and breathed expiring breath,
Here Freedom rose, victorious over death.

But while the earth is still, the heavenly host
List to the fanfare of some angel-choir:
Evangel-trumps they blow, along the coast
Of crystal sea—of crystal mixed with fire.
Thy silence, Gettysburg, accordeth well
With songs of heaven and with groans of hell.

O Gettysburg, thy glorious heaps of dead,
In thousand forms of battle-chaos hurled,
How do they make so small a stain of red
Upon the emerald and the sapphire world?
Henceforth, in all her summer-splendor drest,
'Tis but a ruby on her fountain-breast.

Thy burg was like that dubious star that flashed,
In Perseus, bright as Sirius or Altair,
Then sank to Pleiad dimness as abashed.
Thou hadst thy glory thrust upon thee there;
The eyes of all the earth were fixed on thee;
Three days were thine for immortality.

May they remind us of those silent days,
Between the vacant cross and vacant tomb;
When heaven bent over earth in patient maze,
And waited for the mystery to ungloom.
Angels, whose home is in the lamps of fire,
Must wait and learn, when those three days expire.

The Battle of Gettysburg

THEIR MONUMENT.

Memorial they have raised more hard than brass,
Which no destroying storm may e'er dissolve;
Though change, on wings invincible, shall pass,
And rushing time on wheels of years revolve:
As steadfast sunlight rests on fickle waves,
Unchanging glory shall illume their graves.

Hither they marched, here fought they, and here
fell;

Here have they left their names for evermore;
Names unforgot, when the last fragment-shell
Or sword hath turned again to russet ore;
Till the last trumpet shall divide the sky,
Thine echoes, Gettysburg, can never die.

But there are sounds that may not mingle here,
Sounds as of Rachel's wailing for her sons;
In fifty thousand homes the cry, the tear,
Are marked by him that hears these burial guns.
Great God of armies: Sovereign battle-Lord,
These lamentations in thine ears accord.

To-day begins the mourning, that shall end
Only when the great nation is no more;
What life, what love, what glory now descend
Adown the dark path to the sunless shore?
Few hands may bear them to the silent bourne,
But O, how many million hearts shall mourn.

So move we on, with rhythmic tramp and slow,
To hide their limbs that ne'er again shall march;
To hide them from the wintry storm and snow,
To hide them from the summer suns that parch;
To leave them, in this grand and sweet July,
Beneath that sapphire monumental sky.

The wandering murmur of the ancient foam,
That coldly blossoms on the barren sea,
Still moving westward, never finds a home,
Nor ceases ever from its threnody:
Now, over this predestined field of slaughters,
Like sound be heard, the sound of many waters.

And while we tombward bear each sacred form,
Roll'd in the banner that was all his pride,
Then let be heard the chorus of the storm,
Voice of Jehovah let the flames divide:
When with electric fire the dark cloud sunders,
Such sound be heard—the sound of mighty thunders.

And let a solitary bugle blow,
(A thousand bugles will not stir the slain)
And let us feign the mighty dead below
Once more to hear the battle-news are fain;
And let them in their long, long ranks make room,
For these red heroes borne unto the tomb.

And here, through ages shall the pilgrims come,
To read the treasured names in brass or stone;
And here the morning and the evening drum
Will answer to the church-bell's music lone:
For now the anguish and the horror cease,
And through the vale the breath of God says:
Peace.

O earthy man, to man's brown earth return'd,
O wandering dust, unto its dust come home;
Ashes, that once were fire, to ashes burn'd,
Come, hide, O hide, beneath the turf and loam;
Hide all those wounds beneath the grassy screen;
Change gray and blue to summer robes of green.

The Battle of Gettysburg

THE PÆAN.

Great land: thy first true Independence-day
Out of the depths of time hath dawned at last.
The blot on thine escutcheon's washed away;
Surely, the bitterness of death is past;
Swifter than Agamemnon's post of fire,
The pæan hastens on its path of wire.

So let the pall of war-smoke roll away,
So let the giant west-wind clear the sky,
The hill-sides hail the untormented day,
And heaven and earth give back the sweet July;
Nought but the summer glory intervene
The stained earth and the pure heavens between.

The thunder of this day is as a bell,
Tolling departure of the ancient Woe,
Departing as a ruin'd star that fell,
And plunged forever in the gulf below;
Down, like a millstone in the middle sea,
Bondage is fall'n, and all the land is free.

"Proclaim ye liberty through all the land,
To all the inhabitants thereof"—the Voice
That flashed out light from darkness by command,
With trump of jubilation sounds; "Rejoice."
Roll from the nation, Shame, forever roll,
And Bondage, crumble like a burning scroll.

So let a vaster ether be diffused,
And more effulgent stars illumine the throne;
More purple and more golden light than used
To make the morning and the evening known;
And mightier music for the march of God,
Whose victor-feet through death to life have trod.

and Other Poems

Out where the tides pelagic swing and boom,
Out where the furrowing tempest plows in wrath,
Out where the solemn, solid fog-banks loom
Athwart the steaming monster's rushing path,
Hear him that sits the water-floods above:
"Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof."

Let deep to deep, in booming acclamation,
Atlantic, O Pacific, call to thee:
Hail, happy millions of Titanic nation,
Free all, free ever, O, forever free.
The God of Gilgal cries: "Behold to-day
Your black reproach forever roll'd away."

Long mountains, echo now for jubilation,
Lakes of the northern splendor, shine for joy;
Wild forests, clap your hands in exultation,
Father of waters, flow without annoy;
Ye rippling, ripening prairie-harvests, wave:
Jehovah saith: "Emancipate the slave."

The pines of Maine unto the mightier pines
Of Oregon, send greeting: Brothers tall,
Heard ye the keynote from the battle-lines?
Now tune your branches into harpstrings all,
And let a thousand leagues of air be breath,
And sing the glory that ascends from death.

Thou stony lion upon Marathon,
Rouse thee again beside that lonely shore:
Lion of Chaeronaea, every stone
Take shape, and dominate the fields once more.
Stern monuments are ye, to mark the fields
Where freedom triumphs, and where freedom
yields.

The Battle of Gettysburg

And thou, O anguished lion of Lucerne,
Lift stricken head from unforsaken shield;
Lion of Waterloo, thy vision turn
Not over France, but to this vaster field;
For that great Anguish which engendered thee,
Gave birth to Victory here, beyond the sea.

THE SONG OF AFRICA.

Oceanus sent all his sweet-voiced daughters,
High o'er the black jags of Caucasian chasm,
High o'er the countless laughter of the waters;
They sang to soothe the scornful Titan's spasm;
With hymns accordant to the ocean's boom
They lulled the rhythmic anguish of that doom.

The sorrowing old sea, on Afric's shore,
Hath moaned in thirty thousand miles of foam;
No voice less mighty could thy woes deplore,
Or sing the chorus of thine ancient doom;
Where Bab-el-Mandeb rolls its tide of tears,
Far to the stormy Cape of hopes and fears.

The black Prometheus, nail'd high in his chasm,
Had oceanic hope of freedom yet,
Until he saw, with hope's expiring spasm,
The eagle to the vulture's task was set.
Ill fared it with the bondman, Robert Lee,
So grand antagonist to find in thee.

Thou heir of proud Virginia's old renown,
How hast thou chosen the less noble part?
How hast thou brought thine eagle-genius down,
To strike the wedge through Freedom's wounded
heart;

Is this condign for thee, field-marshal grand,
To rend the vitals of the hearth-fire land?

Beneath great Pompey's sculptur'd eidolon,
While many blades sought the dictator's breast,
'Twas Friendship's blow that brought the Cæsar
down;

"Thou, Brutus, too,"—the deepest stab exprest;
Then fled that awful spirit, with a groan,
Indignant fled, into the vast unknown.

Could thy bland gaze, majestic Washington,
Scornful regard the bondman's suppliant hand?

Yet at thy marble feet what crimes are done,

Thou chieftain-father of thy fatherland:
Wert thou at Gettysburg, ah, would thy glaive
Be cast into the scale against the slave?

For is not every soul porphyrogene,

While that first proclamation's unrepealed?

"We make man in our image"—and I ween

God's image must be free; 'tis signed and sealed

In red; and covenanted in his plan:

"Render to man what things belong to man."

The hoary, sightless rhapsodist of Troy

Who wandered singing by the singing waves,
Chanting the battle-din and battle-joy,

Pronounced the utmost of the doom of slaves:

"The day that takes man's liberty, that day
Takes half his valor and his worth away."

The Battle of Gettysburg

What then, what then, is fitting we should say
Of that high day that makes the bondman free?
How shall we speak the glory of that day,
Stupendous increment of liberty:
O most like his Creator man speaks now:
"With this vast heritage I thee endow,"

As by the light stroke of a royal sword
A noble transformation oft was wrought,
And he that knelt a serf, uprose a lord—
See, from the battle-throes, a nation brought;
See, the dark millions are transfigured now,
A heaven-born glory burning on their brow.

The day that gives man liberty, what then?
That lifts him from the oecumenic scorn,
Makes him the image of his God again,
Crowns him with that whereunto he was born,
Gives him the right his inward self to be,
Alone submit to God eternal, Free.

Lift up the voice, O thou poor Africa,
The yoke, the brand, the fetter and the scourge,
Thy God hath sunk them like a millstone, ah,
Yes, hurled them whence they never shall
emerge;
The hand that smote them is no hand of mail,
But that same hand that felt the Roman nail.

Hark to the sable choir: "Ride on, King Jesus,
King Jesus, no man can a-hinder thee;
Thine everlasting arm, Jehovah, frees us."
Deem ye the rhymes too rude; so may it be.
But while ye delicately test the song,
The God of battles hath made right the wrong.

and Other Poems

Hark yet again: "Swing low, sweet chariot:"
So chants and chimes the Ethiopian choir;
For now they see, their God hath ne'er forgot;
His wheels roll on, through cloud, and storm, and
fire;
Shall not their weary hearts within them burn,
Who God's own meaning in this fight discern?

For in the thing wherein the sons of men
Most proudly dealt, He is above them still;
What they devise, by league, or sword, or pen,
Is found the purpose of his changeless will;
And when their words and works are spoke and
past,
They have sub-wrought his faultless plan at last.

So, ne'er too high a scale can music climb,
(Like rising song-bird, that would sing alone)
Ascending, still ascending, the sublime
Unmeasur'd altitude beneath the throne;
And hovering there, to pour in ecstasy
The warblings of the heart, O God, to thee.

God hath unsaid the word of ancient doom,
God hath turned back the dial of his wrath;
For now, the Attainder-curse no more shall loom
A grisly shadow on thy trembling path;
Across the horrors of the middle sea,
Jehovah thunders: "All thy sons are free."

O sound of joyaunce, sound of triumph—Free:
Sound as of Miriam's tambour by the shore,
Ineffable to those that bounden be;
Piercing the captive's heart unto the core:
O voice, sweet as from singing heaven that fell,
Voice, sweet enough for song of Seraph-el.

The Battle of Gettysburg

Freedom, thou wakest in the human soul
Orchestral music—touching every string;
Making all passions one resounding whole;
Lifting the man on bright, victorious wing.
Proclaim it then—with timbrel, string, and horn:
God's gift to every life of woman born.

Hark to the sable choir, with throats sonorous:
"Go down, Moses, 'way down to Egypt land;
Tell ole Pharaoh"—deep bass now rules the chorus,
"To let my people go"—'tis God's command;
Yes, Moses with his rod hath smit the sea,
And myriads march to that high trumpet: "Free."

DIVINE PRAISE FROM HUMAN WRATH.

The lov'd apostle wept that none was found
Worthy to ope the Providential book;
Till from a-near the throne came seraph-sound:
"Weep not; to Judah's Lamb and Lion look;
Immanuel's victorious, piercèd hands
Worthy are found to loose the seals and bands."

Field-marshal of the starry armies all,
Commanding day and dark, and blood and pain—
With anguish'd torsion of this lesser ball
Moving it on to what sublimer gain?
May we not find, one battle-day appears
To thee, Immutable, a thousand years?

and Other Poems

Prophet, that with weak hands and weary heart,
Hast found the world too many and too strong:
Behold the arms that stand upon thy part;

Ten thousand times ten thousand—sky-born
throng.

Lift up, lift up thine eyes—a little higher,
Behold the chariot and the steeds of fire.

Then see the drunkard's home; recoil not there;

In every corner see a demon lower,
Disease and Hunger, Terror and Despair.

Behold the wife, the trampled, wilted flower;
Behold the children: sad, degenerate brood.
And can He make all this to work for good?

Behold the wake of that foul slaver-ship,

Which madly from the naval vengeance flies.
And leaves behind the victims of the whip

Hurl'd overboard, the ravening ocean's prize;
Short while, the sea with yells and forms is filled;
Dark forms, sharp yells—to be effaced and stilled.

Behold, the streets of Saint Bartholomew;

Behold, Waldensian blood on Alpine snows,
Where crown'd and mitred hate the righteous slew;

See where the hell-fed pyre of Smithfield glows:
Can thus the God of love his plan fulfil,
And make these horrors serve his gracious will?

Behold, Immanuel may not fail nor blench,

But mild and mighty as the sunlight He;
Nor bruis'd reed break, nor smoking flax will
quench,

Till he have Judgment brought to Victory.
Though our innumerable discords boom,
The shrieks of anguish and the knells of doom.

The Battle of Gettysburg

The hates, the wraths, the strifes, the wars. the dismal

Long catalogue of terrene things infernal,
Are islands in the shoreless and abysmal

Mysterious ocean of the Love eternal:
So, whether ocean-breadth, or point of land,
His purpose stands, and shall forever stand.

And all the discords of the earth ascending,
Where, in eternity doth melt our day,
Around his throne and in his ears are blending,
Sweeter than woodland warbles of the May;
All things attun'd to make harmonious hymns,
Where peace is wingless and no sunset dims.

NATIONAL THEMES

A REVOLUTION BACKWARD.

Hath grand America but lifted up
The sunburn'd millions, thus to cast them down;
Dash from their lips the brimming crystal cup;
Tear from their brows the precious civic crown?
What honors all men, and what no man harms,
The freedman's armor and the freeman's arms?

How far from Christ, the bruised reed to break;
How strange to him, the smoking flax to quench?
Although that reed in every wind may shake,
The fuming stalk may make less light than
stench—

Bind up the broken and anoint the dim,
So shall ye best fulfil the work of Him.

Know ye not, if ye will reverse the hand
Upon Time's dial, from the shadows forth,
Soon, on your walls, shall "Mene, Tekel" stand,
And this will happen, be it South or North.
Is there more rash emprise beneath the sun,
Shall politics undo what God hath done?

Dark faces, millions of them, onward go—
The march of many waters—this black sea,
As ye seek or seek not to chain its flow,
An Axeinos* or Euxeinos shall be.
But mind, that if He be too long withstood,
Our God might turn the waters into blood.

* The Black Sea was regularly called by the Greeks *Euxeinos*, the Friendly; but sometimes, *Axeinos*, the Hostile.

The Battle of Gettysburg

“What, are you echoing ante-bellum rant?
What, are you threatening us another war?”
Far, far from that; we are too complaisant;
We’d fight the Haytians, Philippines; we are
More like to flatter you; but we cannot
Eke flatter the Armipotent, God wot.

Bull-fighters, matched against a red-eyed brute,
Are low-down, though the arena shake with
 cheers;
And Indian-fighters, though they ride and shoot,
Are scarce regarded as prime chevaliers;
But they that are God-fighters, great or small,
Will find the worst enlistment of them all.

That king, enthron’d upon the strand, forenenst
The climbing tide, was fain to move his chair;
The Pope, who aimed his thunderbolt against
The comet, failed to singe its shining hair;
For stars and waters on God’s errands run,
And may not pause, e’en to salute the sun.

And he that lashed the Hellespont—his scourge
Tore many a furrow; but the waters roared
With multitudinous laughter, while the surge
Insurgent dashed his pontoons; and ignored
The anger of the master, at whose look
The tribes from Indus to Mæander shook.

Have ye not learned, when God asserts his right,
He splits the mountain and divides the sea;
He makes the stars upon their courses fight;
Th’ eternal gates send forth their chivalry,
As when the Maccabæan prayed with thanks,
Then burst, like earthquake, on the brass phalanx.

Too soon the Freedman saw the glorious sight,
Too full his bosom, and too bright his eyes;
Unsay God's fiat; cry: Let there be night,
And let it roll upon him from the skies.
Let him go down the mount; nor shall he thus
Behold the prospect that's unrolled to us.

Too rashly hath he left the Troglodytes;
Too straight his spine, his forehead much too
high;
We must not dazzle him with heavenly lights,
Too drunk with freedom, and too rich in sky.
There's risk he may a little dance or rave,
So, push him back into the rotting cave.

Command again: Let be a firmament
That shall divide the white man from the black,
And let it stand, eternally unrent,
A great gulf fixed, that each may keep his track;
No matter how He made it at the first,
This is a white man's earth—'tis that, or burst.

He's on the nation's highway, turn him back;
What right has he with us to walk abreast?
Or, let him take the by-path for his track,
Or fall into the rear, with humbler crest.
Until the Ethiopian change his skin,
He is the Out, nor shall his kind get in.

Remind him of the old paternal curse,
Remind him of the post-diluvian doom.
His only chariot is the waiting hearse;
His only triumph is the leveling tomb.
Ye have your Samson, but ye want him blind,
To whom not even hope remains behind.

The Battle of Gettysburg

Tell him to walk beside that bitter lake
That lies of old beneath the frown of heaven;
With those sulphuric waters bid him slake
That thirst, which on the Nebo-mount was given;
"Go there," tell him, "be satisfied or die."
Where fish swim not, and birds may hardly fly.

Made by God, made like God, and made for God,
Will ye, blasphemers, say he's made for you?
Ye'll guide and rule him with your curb and rod—
Convenient theory, if it were true.
Ye claim to use him for your own account,
As Sapor used Valerian, but to mount?

Behold the Samson, of his honors shorn,
Hailed by the myriad jeer, the myriad frown;
Bowing himself beneath the mass of scorn;
But when he bowed himself, how much came
down?
And if too far ye bend the Samson's back,
What pillars are these that will rock and crack?

What say ye, vast and disappointed train,
On whom this shameful, hard bereavement falls?
Say like Ulysses, smit where he should reign,
Say like Ulysses, alien in his halls,
With patient vengeance and with inward scorn:
"Bear this, my heart, for thou hast heavier borne."

Ye know the bitterness of alien bread,
Ye know the hardness of the stranger's stairs;
The tears that burn, unwept, within the head,
The shame fire, to burst forth that never dares;
And that unwritten heritage of groans,
Which noon to night, and night to morn postpones.

His voice who bears th' eternal style, "I AM"
Sundered the waters of the bloody sea;
Ye marched by millions at his oriflamme;
Dry-shod ye walked, and men acclaimed you free.
Cast down, but not destroyed, by faith avow,
He hath not led you thus, to leave you now.

A CENTENNIAL ODE.

Read in the Academy of Music, New York, Decoration Day, 1876, at Reunion of the Grand Army of the Republic.

The sun, like a bloody shield,
On the mountain's shoulder hung;
The clefts of the mountain, reveal'd,
In sudden glory sprung;
Like flickering ember-light, that falls
On armor hanging in ancient halls,
The sunset-glory flashed on the mountain walls.

The sea-waves blossomed in foam,
The sky was shot with fire,
And up in the peak of the twilight dome,
I beheld the day expire;
The stars stepped out from the day's eclipse,
The waves grew cold where the sea-gull dips,
And sails incarnadine grew dim on flying ships.

Then I saw on the mountain's height,
Where the white clouds love to rest,
A hundred figures, in fading light,
That moved to the unseen west;
Their lifted hands from afar I discerned,
Their robes that faint in a halo burned,
Their faces, from moment to moment that backward turned.

The Battle of Gettysburg

I heard a voice that cried:
 'Tis the years of the century o'er;
 They are climbing the mountain side,
 They will march to the sunset-shore;
But here they halt, in high retreat,
A moment, to sing their welcome sweet,
To the new and mightier years, that follow their
 vanishing feet.

And five of those years were red
 As they turned on their awful path,
 With garments like them that tread
 In the winepress of civil wrath.
But the voice cried: Lo, the fraternal stain,
Through ages of ages shall come not again;
The wrath of the five red years by the dust of the
 slain is slain.

Then I saw on the strip of sand,
 Between the hills and the foam,
 A hundred creatures grand,
 The years that are yet to come.
Their brows were bright, their eyes were young,
The harps they held were smitten, and rung,
Keeping murmurous time to the song the old years
 sung.

The song of a hundred years—
 Let it sound o'er the soldiers' graves;
 No more shall ye water with tears
 The dust of the fallen braves;
Shrine, where the heart of a nation turns,
Altar, where memory quenchless burns,
Earth, where perishing flowers are strown on per-
 ish'd urns.

and Other Poems

O flowers, ye are not partial;
Ye will blossom all the same,
O'er the limbs that once were martial,
O'er the hearts that once were flame.
Ye care not, flowers, for the right or wrong;
Ye ask not who were the weak or strong;
But north or south ye sweeten the dust of death's
impartial throng.

In the breast of the great earth-mother,
Northman and Southman they sleep;
Like a brother beside a brother,
In that silence vast and deep.
The Night folds both in her spangled pall,
The heedless snows on both shall fall,
And the sweet breath of flowers perfumes them
kindly all.

Above them the robins will twitter,
The cool green grass will spring,
The butterflies flash and flitter,
And the happy children sing.
They are joined at last, beneath the mould,
Northman brave, and Southman bold;
And the red-hot heart of war must here at last be
cold.

O hundred years to come,
Hear the song of the years gone by;
A hundred times the flowers will bloom,
And a hundred times will die;
But amid them all one flower will blow,
Bedewed with blood, and whiter than snow,
To bloom, while birds shall sing, hearts love, or
fountains flow.

The Battle of Gettysburg

AD MAGNAM BRITANNIAM

1837-1897.

O Britain: on thy shoulders broad,
Thou bearest an Atlantic load;
Nor canst thou find a Hercules
To take thy place between the seas,
And rid thee, for one easeful hour,
Of that great weight which is thy dower.

Four hundred millions, each a soul,
Confess thy kindred or control;
Is it not God hath laid on thee
The burden of the land and sea?
The turret-crown still rims thy brow,
No "Niobe of nations" thou.

Ah, now, profound thy bosom heaves,
Press'd as a cart beneath the sheaves;
Great is thy glory, great thy cares,
For see, thy doom is linked with theirs:
Thy failure were like Samson's fall,
In thy great ruin crushing all.

Voices thou heardest: "Said we not well,
That thou hast dared the undareable?
Thy vast and incoherent weight
Must fall, a loose conglomerate."
But let them die upon the shore;
Voices they are, and nothing more.

They 'sdained to see that in thy pain
The wrong of ages rights again;
The fruits of time and hope shall yet

Be garnered through thy blood and sweat;
For earth's sake thou canst not be free,
'Tis thy high rank that bindeth thee.

And if, in long-postponed war,
The gates of Janus opened are,
Then may thy thunderbolted hand
Hurl flame around the foam-girt land;
Till every red Armada deck
Shall spread thy seas with heaving wreck.

As when Enkelados unbends,
The lonely Ætna rocks and rends—
As down swart Mauna Loa's sides
Roll fiery to meet watery tides—
As Jordan's swellings pass the shore,
And wake the homeless lion's roar:

See drowsy Britomart awake,
Then feel the heart of Europe shake—
Then see the lands of darkness rise,
To catch the morning in her eyes—
Then hear the links of bondage snap,
Like trees beneath the thunderclap.

As when, on the low Bengal shore,
Up Hoogly sweeps the tidal bore,
High-rolling, white, tremendous, swift,
Till cabled merchantmen uplift—
Yea, till the mighty anchor-chain
Is burst, by Ocean's strength amain.

If come the hour (which God forefend)
When thou must face the woful end,
And gird thyself to meet the doom

The Battle of Gettysburg

Of Troy, Tyre, Memphis, Carthage, Rome;
And o'er thee blare, resounding wrath,
The trump of future Hun or Goth;

Then, staggering beneath the weight,
That solemn load that makes thee great,
Like Ajax, fronting the last light,
Address thee to the final fight.
O then, Great Britain, be thou great,
With more than mortal force elate.

Appealing to Sabaoth's Lord,
Untwine thy broad cærulean sword;
Uplift thy ne'er abandon'd shield,
A sunburst o'er the sombre field—
Let the earth hear thy challenge high,
Strike thy last stroke, and standing die.

WHICH ENGLAND ART THOU NOW?

The seas that thunder on thee,
The winds that shout amain,
Bring back, from lands beyond thee,
This question, this refrain:
"Is Mene, Mene, Tekel,
Inscribed across thy brow;
Unveil thee, Hyde or Jekyll,
Which England art thou now?"

What saith the Brahman Ganges,
What saith the Mizraim Nile,
The Himalayan ranges,
The giant Austral isle?
The rose-cliffs of New Zealand,

and Other Poems

The gray Laurentian wall:
"How doth the ancient free land,
The mother of us all?"

We knew an England, bloody
And dark, with deeds of shame;
We knew an England, ruddy,
With cheeks of orient flame.
Is this the red of glory,
Suffused on cheek and brow,
Or the old, scarlet story;
Which England art thou now?

The lion and the leopards,
With all their battle-flame,
Avail not her that jeopards
Her glory near to shame;
And they whose hearts have pandered
To lust, or pride, or gold,
O'er them the royal standard
Will vainly be unrolled.

Thy guns have blown the slaver
From off the Libyan seas;
But *Indicus Papaver*
Hath drugged the weak Chinese;
O, Borgia of the nations,
Sure, this cannot be thou;
Confront these twin citations,
Which England art thou now?

'Tis not thy guns volcanic,
Thy thunder-laden deck,
Can save thy heart from panic,
Thy glory save from wreck.

The Battle of Gettysburg

Before the steel shot rattles
On thy calcareous wall,
Avouch the God of battles
Lord of thy rise or fall.

"The England of the ages
With all thy goods endow;"
So prayed the seers and sages;
Whose England art thou now?
Discard the dubious masking,
Thy central soul avow;
The tribes of earth are asking:
"What England art thou now?"

Fear no cloud-rack that gathers,
On any circling sea,
The Lord God of thy fathers
Will still be God to thee.
Fear no Satanic engines,
To make thee quit the field;
The God of love and vengeance
Is still thy sun and shield.

Stand up before the nations,
Bare that tremendous brow;
Answer our invocations:
Which England art thou now?
Awake, awake, and sing, land,
And dwell no more in dust;
This, this is our true England,
The Mighty and the Just.

UNFULFILLED RENOWN

AN UNFULFILLED RENOWN.

"The inheritors of unfulfilled renown."

—*Shelley*, "Adonais."

"Ah, vouloir a l'histoire ajouter des chapitres,
Et puis, n'être qu'un front qui se colle a des vitres."

—*Edmond Rostand*.

PRELUDE.

Ill-met, ill-mated sure, are Death and Youth;
And as the angler drops the tiny fish,
Hook-freed, back to its fluent amber home;

So Death might loose the bands, when he hath
ta'en
A stripling or a suckling; for there are
So many broken, frustrate things; half-pyramids;

Columnar trees are broken by the storm,
Right noble ships are broken on the shore,
Right royal men have fallen in high place.

And why should the young life be broken too?
The pillar shattered, ere the architrave
With Phidian handiwork be laid thereon?

Knowledge is linked to sorrow, as the slave
Was chained to th' oar, on the Ligurian foam;
Taught in the school of storm, and toil, and pain.

PREFACE.

The tower, unfinished on the Shinar plain,
The broken column in the Tadmor waste,
The ship, that foundered, little from the shore,
The watch-fire, quench'd ere came the prodigal;
The fish, that failed to leap the cataract,

The Battle of Gettysburg

The land-bird, that essayed too wide a gulf,
The camel's bones, behind the caravan;
The swimmer, who attained not to the beach,
The traveler, dead before the founts of Nile,
The standard-bearer, 'neath the bastion fall'n,
The Libyan, who but missed to shatter Rome;
The prince in story, whose untimely bier
Anticipates the coronation day;
Death raced with Glory for a life, and won;
That beautiful and burden'd pilgrim, she
Who failed a little space from Bethlehem,
And (like the lily-stem that spends itself
On one dear blossom) gave a life to earth,
And passed from earth at parting of the ways.

The longing passion-heart, broken and gone
'Ere love's sweet breath had murmured: "Yes, I
love."

The eyes of earth, that have too soon beheld
The perfect beauty of the universe.
—Thus, crown and scepter but surmount the pall.

Hear my words, mother, hide them in your heart.
They talked of me as of a prodigy;
Said that I had a genius, and great things
Would yet be done by me; and at such words
I saw you shake your head, as if you feared
My head would soon be turned; but are there not
Some things besides a little foolish praise
To turn men's heads; and my poor head is not
So lightly swivelled, like a weather-cock,
To gyrate at each warm breath of men's lungs.
Nor let me even call it foolish praise;
The highest wisdom is, to utter praise,
Harmonious with the elder voice of truth.

To have a genius is to see more down

Into the sombre heart of man; that scene
Where death reigns silent in the land of cold,
The zero absolute from warmth of God.
Thus, as when studying the moon's face,
The clearer glass more clearly demonstrates
That in that wrinkled orb there is no life,
Nor air, nor fire, nor sea—a planet-slag—
So, higher genius sees the lower down,
And while the common man walks common fields,
The genius to Avernus hath gone down,
Amid the rivers dark, and sighing shades.

Sad mother: is it not a perilous gift
To see a little farther than your kind?
The child, that plays upon the foaming shore
Knows sand, and shell, and foam, and sees afar
The shining network of uncounted waves,
Wherein the sun's illustrious image, caught,
Is shattered to a thousand shards of light.
The diver, sinking to unfoaming depth,
To grope in green subaqueous twilight, sees
Old wrecks around him lie, and monstrous forms
Like meteors, swift and silent, gliding by.

Whether of these enjoys the ocean more?

Am I not vaster by experience
Than Sophokles or Shakespeare, in that they
Could only write their tragedies, while I
Have lived mine, and absorbed it to the soul?
To be, to do, to suffer,—I have been;
Title to immortality is mine.
Now, as the planet-fragment, in its rush,
Passing through some brief arc of atmosphere,
Flames far (ill-omen'd as Althæa's brand)
Shedding a sudden glory, and expires;
And what was for a moment various flame,
Is turned for ages into cosmic dust;

The Battle of Gettysburg

"Dust art thou, and to dust shalt thou return ;"
And art thou, then, so much concerned to shine,
While passing through thine earthly arc of air?

And I have suffered ; for creative power
Can make dust capable of pain or joy.
Existence, then, and pain, my double dower ;
I've been and suffered, if I have not Done.
I have lived much in little while, much felt,
Much suffered, little attempted, and less done.

Sometimes, indeed, the deeply wounded soul
Too wildly seeks to utter all its pain,
And too much life flows with the utterance ; as
Epaminondas plucked the steel, and died.

Thou art no Spartan mother, mother mine :
And thou wilt not despise me, that I've come,
After this dolorous rout of all my hopes,
Without my shield, from a fight too great for me.
True, I had smelled the battle from afar,
The thunder of the captains and the shout
Had heard ; and with a joy ineffable
Of battle, I moved to meet the armed men ;
And there was peal, and blast, and neigh, and stamp,
And clash, and clang ; a thousand challenges,
With many a thousand answers—and along
The line, were dints upon a thousand shields,
And ranks of spears waved up and down, like reeds,
That bend in flood ; and spears were heard to crash,
Like slim tall trees, that crash along the path
Of thunder, when the black tornado smites ;
Days of young joy, wherein I leaped to hear
The thunder of the captains, and the shout
Of nations trampling on the grassy floor,
The clamor of the imperial trumpet's voice,
And, mingling with the trumpet's haughty roll,
The brave antiphonal of neighing steeds,
Whose hoof-beats drum the hollow-breasted earth ;

The glorious jingling of the bits and spurs,
The very rhythm and poetry of war;
Quick-flaming eyes of horses and of men,
Loud, eager breath of men and horses, too,
Vapor from lungs that soon shall steam no more—
Sword, saddle, gauntlet, starry helm and plume,
(Plume like the pine that bends above a cliff)
"With boots like bastions," as the imperial-brow'd
And olive-tinted Corsican ordained;
The thunder-march of those Cyclopean steeds,
With men that sat like Centaurs, and the flash
Of thousand sabres, simultaneously
Coruscant all along the billowing rank,
Like lightning traversing a stretch of cloud.
Of battle such as this I had the joy,
But Victory had wings, and fled from me.

Oh, to have been one moment in full bloom,
The sweet triumphant moment, if but one.
What slow, molecular changes must have been,
What ceaseless, unstilled beating of the cells,
To make the plant bloom after hundred years:
But that brief bloom that crowns the century
Is thought to countervail the process long.
See there, enthroned upon the acropolis,
(Like Cassiopeia, bright in starry chair)
And flashing with the pillar'd Parthenon,
Far-seen to the Acrocorinthian crag,
Far-seen to heights of Argos on the south,
The waves of Salamis beneath her feet,
And Marathon not many miles away,
The maiden champion of Athens, see!
But, transient is the blooming of that flower;

Soon dimmed the brightness of the eye of Greece,
Soon dulled the splendor of that carved gem,

The Battle of Gettysburg

Borne on the wealthy bosom of the earth;
Brief is the glory, and the ruin long.

To shine; though it were like th' exploding star
Which lit the ebon heavens with alarm,
Which flamed for days in awful brilliancy,
And made star-gazers shudder, murmuring: What
Is happening in yon abysmal sky?
What sudden conflagration in the wastes?
Is it collision of a binary world,
In mutual crash and mutual ruining;
Where, ages whirling with incalculable
Haste, and with aye an orbit smaller, aye
A swifter self-involving narrower flight,
Center of this groping for center of that,
Like giant wrestlers in a burning room
That grope and grip; or, as the Danite blind
Grappled for Harapha—so those twin orbs
Become Jehovah's flint and steel, to strike
Together, and turn their force ineffable
Into one spark, that shall illuminate
The desert darkness of a lonely sky.

The Carian sire of history hath said,
There is no pang, among the sons of men,
Than this more hateful: To know many things,
And have no power to master the event.
Mind of Teiresias, in wisdom old,
Cassandra's shining and Promethean eyes,
These can foresee, foretell, but not forefend,
The swift-approaching and expanding doom,
Which, suddenly appearing in the west,
A cloud no larger than man's hand, ascends
And whirling comes, till all the heavens are dread
With lurid vapor and with rending bolts,
And the incalculably rushing blast
Smites works of men with heaven's artillery:

Then, like toy-houses, labour'd streets go down,
And many a virid human leaf is whirled
From life's deciduous tree—a moment thus
Divides all time from all eternity.
A moment since—it was a garden of God
Upon the earth; and now, a howling waste.

It has been said, or sung, to various tunes,
That “de profundis” comes the poet's cry.
Yes, poet's cry, or Titan's agony.
But man needs no great deeps to be o'erwhelmed;
One white-head billow, reaching for the shore,
May do for him all that the abyss could do.
'Tis not calamity can dwarf the soul;
Mere pain may be as lightning to the mind,
Revealing, rousing, energizing it,
And stirring all its tingling powers anew.
The lazy soldier sleeps, or games, or eats,
Until the horizontal sudden flash
For one prophetic moment antedates
The word of thunder from the lips of steel,
And the shot's earthquake-impact on the wall.
Then hath he meat to eat peace knows not of,
And feasts himself upon the joy of war,
Finding his life amid the strokes of death.
The son of Kish, how pusillanimous,
Who, fearing to be crowned, in baggage hid?
But Saul, being crowned, shall wax magnanimous,
Rousing a mind to match his giant frame.
He hears the cry of Gilead, and sends back
King's word amain: “Fear not; to-morrow, by
That time the sun be hot, ye shall have help.”
The princeling, nurs'd in dalliance of court,
May, in some fateful day in hall or field,
Become the prince—approve himself the king;
His crown become an aureole at the board

The Battle of Gettysburg

Of council, and his helm a guiding star
Amid the night of battle. Character
May be that lily that blooms best at night,
In what oblivion of eld had lain
The name of Xenophon, if he had not,
(After the failure of the great emprise,
Young Cyrus gone, Klearchos gone, and gone
Thessalian Menon, Plato's friend) both found
Himself, and found his opportunity.
Th' immortal mercenary myriad
Bewilder'd in Kardouchian tribes and snows,
Squarely confronted death, as death looked down
From glacial heights and arrow-bristling cliffs;
Made him their rearguard, lion of retreat,
Still marching backward, keeping front to foe,
Until the vanguard roared: "The Sea, the Sea."

And hast thou buried all those gifts of heaven
Beautiful powers, sweet faculties of good,
For which no day of manifest use can come?
There's many a shipwreck'd treasure in the sea,
Whose latitude and longitude are known,
Yet shall no diver to the world restore.
Many the chidings for love-words not spoken,
Many the chidings for high deeds not done;
But pity, O pity be the heritage,
Pity for him who longed, who would have done;
Who felt within himself some Samson-thews,
Some kindling of the sacred altar-fires,
But in the arena found no waiting hand
To lead him to the pillars—wasted strength;
More vain than ocean's hammering on the crags;
More vain than waving of the comet's hair;
An embryonic glory, dead ere born.

I'm moved by faint and wavering consciousness
That in this desert-soul the ruins lie

Of a wreck'd genius; Tadmor in the waste;
Prostrate or frustrate columns of a fane
That might have stood against the Athenian blue;
Acanthus-leaves of poetry that grew
Amid the squalid plinths of potter's clay.
Oh, if that dream had e'er come true to me—
Sweet dream of those Hellenic heathen—then
Sound had been heard of undiscordant lyre,
Which in this soul had bid the ruins rise,
In order and proportion fair, against
The azure vantage of the firmament.
Heard I a voice Alcideän, that shook—
Shook loose the great Skeleton's grip, and brought
The sweet Alcestis to her lord and home;
Were I but loosed from superincumbent doom,
The triple generations entailed woe;
The stone of death rolled back, and the faint life
Forth-summon'd to the glory of the day;
Had this but been my lot: Thy lot? and Thou?
What art thou but a wintry, torpid fly,
That's warmed a moment by December sun
Upon the icy pane; move, buzz, and fall;
No genial earth or summer is for thee."

This is the sediment of life to me:
Bitter, that I have failed in life to do
The things my loved ones have believed that I
Could do and would—the things they fondly
thought
Were marked for me by Providence divine.
That thought distils a double bitterness;
For it must seem, not only have I failed
To satisfy anticipative pride,
And helplessly have falsified the high
Presage of friends prophetic; water, this,
From Marah's well; with wormwood deep in-
fused;

The Battle of Gettysburg

But I have also failed in the high quest
To seek, to overtake, to find, to grasp
What I am grasped for by that Wisdom high:
This should be bitterness, by seven-fold
More dense than absinth or the gall of asps;
For, if it wring from me the distill'd tears,
Harsh as the drops of the Gomorrhan sea,
To know I've disappointed all the dreams
And glad anticipations of my loved—
Then who hath tears, in measure fit, to weep
The failure of the half-girt soul to guard
The charge laid on by Lord of heaven and earth?
Time, which ameliorates the rugged lines
Of stark events, and softens to a haze
Seen through the atmosphere of memory,
The things that pressed too close upon the soul,
Softens and changes, yea, transfigures them,
Till like the distant mountains, they grow dim
In shadowy purple, nor man's eye is sure
If it be cloud or mountain. Such our case;
For Time and Memory conspire to weave
Their web of dimness o'er the eyes of men:
And if with hand iconoclast, we rend
The veil, that we may see again the dark
Harsh features of a melancholy past—
So that our mountains must again o'erhang
With all their crags of horror, all their chasms,
And all their shivering and ill-omen'd woods;
Then—then, when time and memory have failed,
Let Hope take up the bitter task—bright Hope—
Backward let her project the giant light
By which she gilds the peaks of coming days;
So let the unmapp'd future and the past
Known but too well, be one horizon all;
In the same radiance be illuminate;
Let the whole round be filled with light from Him

To whom the past and future are at one.
I saw the sunset once, when half the heaven
Was ermin'd o'er with woolly clouds, far up.
The sunward side of every one of these
Became a hillside pure, of yellow gold.
And while I marveled at the wealth of God,
Lavish'd—a moment's joy to darkening world—
The golden hills to ruby mountains turned;
And so, meseemed, my God had said to me:
"Didst thou think that gold beautiful, my child?
But I will show thee beauty more than this;
Behold my crimson jewels on the sky,
And know that, as the ruby is precious far
Beyond the gold, my beauteous things in price
Are far beyond all rubies and all thoughts."

I saw the morning-heaven transfigured once
From glory unto glory; saw the clouds
There, like a Persian army, broad of wing.
O'er the vast ether-field, the cumuli
Rolling in troops, and restless heaps and ranks,
Mingled cærulean and argent arms,
Driv'n onward by the giant Zephyrus,
And tipt with flamelets of the blinking sun,
Weaving an interchanging light and shade
Moved on, with flash of armor and of arms.

And all a wakeful night I watched the stars
On silent march, until the wasted moon,
Thin to a skeleton of her bright self,
Stole westward through the hyacinthine sky.
And vanished on the waiting breast of morn.

So God, unchanging, makes all else to change.
My soul enlarges, rises; I have heard
The voice that comes from somewhere past the
stars.

Does not the servant rise when he hath heard
The master's voice, though from another room?

The Battle of Gettysburg

There was a prison once, whose walls did shrink;
But me—my prison-walls enlarge, roll back,
Like those which God once for his servants shook,
With earth's concussion, at the sound of hymns.

The Nile-born prophet, upon Nebo's crown,
Who saw the hills of God in order ranged
On that side Jordan toward the sunset—lo,
How God's great panorama was unroll'd:
Before his undimm'd eyes the glory spread
Of morning on the mountains; Hermon's snow
Flashed like a breastplate in the silent North,
And in the South, the palms of Jericho
Far-seen, a tufted verdure on the plain;
While all those miles, between the palms and snow,
Were backed with veteran mountains, rank on rank,
Though here and there, a gray centurion
A little o'er his fellows rears his top.
The land of Judah to the utmost sea
Was straight before him to the west; a land
Of silver olives and of golden corn,
Of diamond fountains and of opal streams,
A land of milk and honey, oil and wine.
The eye on Mizraim's queen that oped, and flags
Of Nile, on Moab's voiceless mount will close;
That heaven-built watch-tower of the holy land;
—Not voiceless—for the voice of God was there,
To sing his servant, like a babe to rest;
Thus, weary, but not weak, with forty years
Thrice-told, the mount of vision and of death
He climbed, and laid his soul upon the breast
Of God, his form upon the mamelon
Of Nebo, where it swells from Pisgah's top;
And as the swallow, or the swan, from nest,
Or northern lake, southward and sunward flies,
He to bright warmth of everlasting love

Thence fled, and to the immemorial home.

Not darkly borne am I, nor whirled afar,
Like helmless vessel upon midnight sea,
But moving onward, with the cosmic sweep
Of planet or of star—and upward too.
It grows not dark with me, though I have heard
Aye as of death and darkness hand in hand;
Round me a sweet, pure, radiance comes and comes,
Which is not like the moonlight as it shines
Down the long hillside to the silent lake;
It is not like the solemn nebula
That bursts in worlds upon the mighty glass,
And brings the silence of the universe
To the astronomer's awaken'd ear.
It is not as the west cloud, furnace-piled,
Which the sun kindles for his funeral pyre;
Nay, 'tis not even like that dearest light,
The blue and silver splendor ere the dawn,
When seemed the night forgot her one bright star,
And left it burning till the sunlight came;
Nor as the band of light across the wave,
When, like a wounded warrior from the field,
The red sun rises, vast, from ocean's brim,
And makes the cold Atlantic a red sea.
Nor glow upon the mountain's morning-edge,
That faintly burns through intervenient fog;
Nor beams of crimson or of flashing blue
Hurl'd by the jealous sun through rainbow glass
'Mid the brown air of old cathedral shafts.

It grows not dark with me, for God is light,
And those are not the lights that kindle now;
Mine eyes are opening now upon a light
To which all these are bars of darkness. Light
In which all suns and planets are as motes,
That dance in sunbeams in your half-lit world.

The Battle of Gettysburg

O Light of Light, and God of God, take me:
Surely, the bitterness of death is past,
For I am now in God, and God is love.
The true light shines, the darkness passes on,
For I am now in God, and God is light.
I mourned and wept, because on earth the crown
Of sweet accomplishment, victorious work,
Was never given to me—never to me.
Eternal One: canst thou, wilt thou, restore
The lost years, ruin'd by the cankerworm,
Those blasted years and famish'd, of my soul?
Those years, crumbled in void unfathomable,
Those steps of time by which I climbed, which now
Have dropped and vanished in the gulf behind,
And left me trembling on the dizzy verge,
At whose foot foams immeasurable sea.
Thou art the God of order, yet meseems
Thou hast unsaid the fiat of my life;
And all the process and the order changed
To weltering chaos back and brooding night.

Arise, O vanished years, and stand with me:
Ye waste, unharvested, and spectral years,
Smit by the locust and the palmer-worm,
By canker-worm and caterpillar peel'd.
The Infinite hath said: "I will restore."
Therefore, lost years, arise: He calls for you.
The voice that shook the abyss of chaos lone,
And gilded with the primal cosmic light
The weltering vast of matter inchoate,
That speaks souls quick from the abyss, and calls
The things that are not, and, behold, they are—
Shall gloriously compel thy mournful past
In lovely palingenesis to rise.
O happy greeting, when the shrivell'd hours
That flew from thee like wither'd leaves, shall glow,
Eternal beauty, immarcescible.

ANNALS OF THE POOR

PARODY ON A POPULAR BALLAD.

To walk close, close to her I tried;
But there were many walked beside.
Why did so many others come
To see my only Nellie home?

Her beauty needed no convoy;
She now was safe from all annoy;
The hands that wreck, the feet that roam,
Might join in seeing Nellie home.

They made that home fine as they could,
And many a green tree, stout and good,
Oak, maple, made their branches meet,
To guard her home from August heat.

They deck that home, and deck it well,
With amaranth and immortelle;
"But why not richer blooms?" said I.
They said: "All other blooms would die."

She would have loved it, had she seen—
That splendid tabernacle green;
But midnight on her eyes had come,
Ere she could reach the little home.

And ere she passed the threshold o'er,
They gave me just one sweet glance more.
I saw, and marked it with a moan,
From that face, something great was gone.

We passed into the entrance hall,
We saw that it was very small.
But when she reached her little flat,
She did not seem to care for that.

The Battle of Gettysburg

That entrance-hall, a fragrant screen
Was hung with fronds of evergreen;
But there was smell of damp and loam,
And here, at last, was Nellie home.

And (what on earth could ne'er be said)
I too shall rest in that green bed.
And never shall I feel at home,
Till I where Nellie is may come.

I've seen the mighty guards of stone
That watch thy crypt, Napoleon;
Where from lone ocean thou art come
To sleep beneath the soldier's dome.

Oh, not such Caryatides,
No sculptured images like these
Are needed to keep watch o'er thee,
Where thou art laid, apart from me.

As often as I tried to come
I always found that there was some
Inexorable Genius there,
The Angel of the Sepulchre.

Unwearied warder, there to wait,
In rain or shine; and early, late,
He stood, but never oped the gate,
As strong as heaven, as hard as fate.

And Nellie now no more is seen,
The grassy door is shut between;
And I am gone, the West to roam,
Still thinking: "I saw Nellie home."

THE LOSS OF A FORTUNE.

"In one hour, so great riches is come to nought."
—*Holy Scripture.*

Home they brought the dying boy,
Poor, hard-featur'd city lad;
Scarce had know the use of toy,
Glimpses rare of flowers he had.

"Babbled o' green fields"—ah, no;
Not for him the like of that;
But to work, and come, and go,
Where his mother kept the flat.

Waited she, in that poor home,
And the crown of every day
Was, when her one boy would come,
And give her his scanty pay.

He was beauteous in her eyes,
She was angel unto him;
If you saw them on this wise,
Man, your strong eyes would be dim.

Where's the mother with a boy,
But has known this—felt it all?
Mother, son, and mutual joy—
Home as dear as it was small.

Verily thou art a God
Hiding glory back of gloom;
Using lightning for thy rod,
Turning daylight into doom.

The Battle of Gettysburg

For, alas, there fell a day—
Fell, as Lucifer from heaven,
When the soul, from its wee clay
In one dreadful wrench was riven.

Like the fish-boat on the Banks
(Busy crew, with net or trawl),
Iron mass a moment clanks
On their wooden tub—that's all.

So the mass of paint and steel
Stains itself with childish blood;
Swift and soft on muffled wheel,
Hurled him sidewise, like its mud.

Big policeman walked alone
Bore him up the stairs with ease;
Big policeman, with a groan
Sat, and held him on his knees.

Quick it came—the mother's shriek,
Agony without alloy;
"Speak to me, my Jimmy, speak,
'Tis your mother, Jimmy boy!"

"Oh, the blood upon his head;
What has happened him? A fall?
Ach, don't tell me he is dead;
Sure, you don't mean that at all."

Kindly neighbors tried to cheer;
Made their voices strangely low;
Whispered: "Don't take on so, dear;
For you're very poor, you know."

"Yes, we're poorest of the poor,
Now that we have lost the lad;
Jimmy boy, he was, for sure,
All the riches that we had."

THE WEE THING SMA'.

THE WOMAN: "Wha, wha is tirlin' at the pin,
Wha rattlit at the gate?"

THE WEE THING: "It is the witness of thy sin,
The love that's fell as hate."

"O woman, dost thou ken me
yet?

Hast thou forgot thy fa'?

O woman, thou shalt ne'er for-
get;

I am the wee thing sma'.

"Of me, of me, they hold no
parle,

Amang the sons o' men;

I am the outcast o' the warl',
Mither, lat me come ben."

THE WOMAN: "I canna, canna lat thee in;
I am too much afeard."

THE WEE THING: "Fear, should hae come before
thy sin,
An' thou maun dree thy weird.

"The years are gane, the years
are seven,

Since that day, black an' dour,
When frae my mither I was
riven,

An' cast upon the muir.

The Battle of Gettysburg

"Aneath the muirland's only tree,
Aneath its mighty bole,
Was left to rot, the thing so wee,
Within the rotten hole."

THE WOMAN: "I canna, canna hae thee noo,
For my guidman to see;
O, if he were thy father too,
It's happy I should be."

THE WEE THING: "The ghaist moon glimmers fair,
the nicht,
On burn, an' brae, an' byre;
But I'm no cheered by ony licht,
Nor warm by ony fire.

"The kirkyard's crowded, on the
brae,
Wi' men, an' wives, an wains;
But I maun wander, to an' frae,
Amang the kirkyard stanes.

"The ghaisties in the yard so
braw,
They winna lat me in,
They hiss: Aroint thee, deevil
sma',
Thou art a child o' sin."

THE WOMAN: "Douce, happy man, wi' honest
wife,
An' wi' his childer three,
How could I show him the wee
life
That ne'er lay on my knee?"

and Other Poems

THE WEE THING: "The lambs are faulded frae the
wat,
'An' warm an' safe the kye;
It is a gruesome thing to lat
Your wee thing bide out-by.

"The birds that are too sma' to
sing
'Are cuddled in the nest;
They feel the fauld o' mither's
wing,
They love her downy breast.

"Ah, mither, ne'er a hand to hap
Your wee thing frae the
storm;
Ah, mither, ne'er a woman's lap,
To hauld the wee bit form."

THE WOMAN: "Thy faither's turned to dust an'
bane,
The brown leaves o'er him fa';
'Tis scriven on the marble stane,
How fine he was, an' a'."

THE WEE THING: "I canna be so wee an' sma'
That God should fail to see;
An' when he counts the murders
a',
Will he no think o' me?

"Had I no soul at a', at a';
When doth the soul begin?
How big must be a wee thing
sma'
To mak' its murder sin?

The Battle of Gettysburg

"Dark mither, this before we
part,

That never rest shalt win;
Hadst thou me keepit on thy
heart,

God micht hae washed thy sin.

"Nane askit, was it boy or girl,

When I was thrown awa',
'An' I gave but one deein' skirl,
Last o' the wee thing sma'.

"That baby-skirl, so wee an'
sma',

Above the trumpet's din
'Ascended, like the angel's ca',
The ear o' God to win.

"'Tis dawn; an' I must rin my
lane,

Unhapp'd wi' turf an' clods,
Nor scriven on a wee bit stane,
That I am ane o' God's."

AT RICHARD CAMERON'S GRAVE.

"O, to be wi' you, Richie."

—*Alexander Peden, the Covenanter.*

To be with Richard Cameron, and the men that
stood for God,

In the snows and on the mountains, in the heath
and in the wood:

We well might wish it too.

The men that stood upon the rock, while others
played with sands,

and Other Poems

Who held the truth of God in the grip of strenuous
hands;

Ah, would we were with you.

Thy fight is over, Richie, and thou hast past afar,
To sing, "Io, triumphe," where the saints have rest
from war,

I think I hear their song.

Thy sword was left for us below, thy crown is
found above,

Thy solemn thrill of battle is now the thrill of love;
But we, O Lord, how long?

Thou wast a man of war, Richie, and o'er thy moor-
land grave

Let blue-bell, thistle, heather, haw, their yearly tro-
phies wave,

Bright banners of the free;

For in the silent heaven of peace, peace doth thy
heart enfold

And in the blood-bought grave, peace, angel-ey'd,
shall watch thy mold;

So would I were with thee.

For while thou liest there, my chief, enswath'd in
burial-sark,

The earth to me is waxing dim, and soon shall it be
dark,

And time is wet with tears.

Bereft of thee, my comrade, of thy spirit firm as
steel, —

Thine arm from God a levin-bolt, thy voice a thun-
der-peal—

How sore the fight appears.

The Battle of Gettysburg

Hath God forgot our Scotland with her blood-
sprent heath and snow,
Where erst the blood of heroes, now the tears of
women flow,
To seal the covenant true?
His eye is still on Scotland old, and every tufted
mound
That hides their dust and ashes, unto him is holy
ground,
As aught beneath the blue.

RACHEL'S DEATH NEAR BETHLEHEM.

"And there was still some way to come to Ephrath.
... and Rachel died, and was buried in the way to
Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem). And Jacob set up a
pillar upon her grave; the same is the Pillar of Rachel's
grave unto this day. And it came to pass, as her soul was
in departing (for she died), that she called his name,
Son-of-my-sorrow; but his father called him, Right-hand-
son."

Son of my sorrow, little babe, are thou;
With hands, instead of eyes, I'm fain to trace
Thy form, so new to earth; for now
A cloud comes o'er my weary face.

I am so tired in wrestling with strong death,
That I must sleep, ev'n if I never wake;
For me and for my babe there is not breath
Enough, that both may take.

And I must go, that this new face may come,
And I must die, that this new life may be;
How sad that in this earth there is not room
For both my babe and me.

Here, then, I pass the flickering torch to him
Who shall be, to old age, his sire's delight;
And may that torch, which for me waxeth dim,
For my babe burn most bright.

Where is my sister Leah? she will weep;
Her little sister could I be again,
As in the Syrian days, among the sheep,
We played, a happy twain.

Ah, why should love come in to gender hate,
Man's love, a wedge to rive the heart in twain?
Fondling a husband, as the dove her mate,
Hating a sister with the hate of Cain.

I shall not see the town of Bethlehem;
I fear I shall not even see the morn;
The blossoms fade . . . I am as one of them. . .
They fade, ere fruits be born.

Here lies a pitcher, broken near the well,
Whose sherds can hold the sacred fount no more;
Here lies an empty and an outcast shell,
Upon life's trampled shore.

Here let my simple monument arise,
That travelers through all the days may scan
The solemn and tremendous sacrifice,
Which woman makes for man.

The Battle of Gettysburg

“THOU HAST GAINED THY BROTHER.”

—*Jesus Christ.*

What towering, monster ghost is yon,
That sways amid the ocean brume,
Far out, the shelving beach driv'n on,
Involv'd in clouds of spume?

One mast is there, one mast of three,
And she lies restless, broadside on,
Still hammered by the windward sea,
And half the deckwork gone.

A lone man, clinging to the shrouds,
Dim grandeur of a dying form,
Hovering between the sea and clouds,
Last victim of the storm.

And who are these upon the sand
With eyes upon the blinding sea?
A bronz'd and weather-beaten band:
The life-boat's company.

There stand they, while the tempest peals,
Girded with buoyant breast-plate stanch;
There stands the life-boat on its wheels;
But who will dare the launch?

Where is the man whose hero-shout
The glad obedience shall compel,
To roll that blessed life-boat out,
Through tempest, foam, and swell?

Behold, he comes, swift-foot he comes,
Down from the long dune to the beach;

He shouts, but the storm's rolling drums
And trumpets drown his speech.

And O, there's one that holds him there:
She knows her loss by sea and storm;
How can he scorn a mother's prayer,
And dash aside her form?

"Your brother John, a man of men,
How often he went far a-sea;
Three years ago he went, and then
Came never back to me."

"Let the sea bellow, the wind screech;
That mast will soon be down;
Mother, I can't stay on the beach,
And see that last man drown."

The storm inspires her plea again:
"Ah, no, ah, leave me not, my son;
How can I be bereaved of twain?
Remember brother John."

"Never a wind that blows, but I
Remember that stout sailor-brother;
But we can't let this creature die,
And I must go, my mother.

"Pray for these men that pull the oars,
For they have wives and mothers too;
We all may reach eternal shores,
Ere we come back to you."

No more: a smile, a kiss of hand,
He waves to the poor mother there;
So leaves her on the spray-wet sand,
In agony of prayer.

The Battle of Gettysburg

She leans upon her weeping friends,
The huddled women pray and blanch;
His voice against the storm ascends,
Like battle-trumpet: "Launch!"

And at the waving of his hand,
And at his half-heard, kingly roar,
Those men, with eyes now flaming grand,
Move downward from the shore.

Down sank the boat, and up she rose,
Behind the snow-topt hills of foam;
Straight-steer'd toward the goal she goes,
To bring that remnant home.

'And now, beside the pounding hulk,
Dark mass, that soon will fragments be,
The life-boat lifts her tiny bulk,
And dances on the sea.

Now would those men outroar the blast,
They have the wages of their hope;
That clinging one forsakes the mast,
Hand-sliding down the rope.

'Above the saved, the chieftain stands;
Up, down the boat comes bounding on;
He bellows shoreward through his hands:
"Mother, it's brother John!"

ALONE IN OCEAN.

"The burden of the desert of the sea"—
On sea or land, all works for God's decree.

What pitchy cloud, high-rolling, shades the main,
What dreadful altar fires the ocean-plain?

Wouldst thou of earth the utmost horror know,
Learn from this tale; I learned it long ago.
I saw the man whom God ordained to save
Brought back to mortals from the ocean-grave.
First, hurl'd to ocean from the wrath of fire
With many more, he saw the last expire.
Between the upper and the lower death,
The flame ascending and the flood beneath,
Back and still back, by conflagration driven,
With flames that darkened more than lit the heaven,
They, from the trusted deck, whereon they stood,
Leaped from the seven-fold furnace to the flood.

This man plunged also, with his college friend;
Amid what scene their earthly love must end!
He found himself of that best friend bereft,
For one is taken, and another left,
Alone—the vast hulk sunk in this profound;
Alone—no human sight, no human sound;
Comrades of ruin, sinking one by one,
Have left this man—tremendous fate—alone.
Alone—no voice but of the rushing wave;
Alone—encompass'd by the engulfing grave.
Immeasurably small, an atom cast
On ocean's plain, immeasurably vast,
O human kind, have ye forever gone,
And left this castaway to toss alone?
The sea-bird slides upon his curving way

The Battle of Gettysburg

And skimming, wets the lonely face with spray
Or deems the swimmer dead, and winging near
Affronts the human face without a fear,
Then shrieks, discordant with the ocean's tone;
A second wing-sweep leaves the man—alone.
Poor creature-fellowship—but when 'tis flown,
More utterly that being floats alone.

On far sea-breadths, the vainly-laboring wave
Tumbles and bellows, with no shore to lave.
The lullaby of death, the ocean's moan
Would sing to final sleep, the man, alone.

But he, the anguish and the horror gone,
Is filled with joy—for he is not alone.
The awful ocean, and the depthless air
Are filled with Presence, for his God is there.
The innumerable laughter of the waves
Smiles on his soul—he hath a Christ that saves.
Calm as a summer sky with shining fleece,
For life or death, he hath the God of Peace.

It is for life! Lo, an ascending wave
Like resurrection, lifts him from the grave
Where, poised a moment on the billow's height
He hath, like angel's wing, a sail in sight.

What was that ship? A mote on ocean cast,
What was the man? An atom in the vast.
But Providence divine, with plan complete,
Ordains to save—the mote and atom meet.
Uplifted by the grip of tarry hands,
'Mid shouts of gladness on the deck he stands.

'Tis well to know, that rescued life was given
Thenceforth, in teaching men the ways of heaven.

STABAT MATER.

Mourning, heart-transfixèd mother,
Standing by the cross of Him
Like whom earth beholds no other—
See his pure eyes growing dim,

Turn a last earth look upon thee,
(Ere He enters into rest)
With that gentleness that won thee,
When he lay upon thy breast.

Mother, what hath Jesus left thee,
To uphold thy sinking days?
Is it God hath thus bereft thee?
Dark—how dark—are all his ways!

Mother, still his voice can ease you,
In the heart's tremendous loss;
Hark! it is the voice of Jesu
Sounding from the bitter cross.

In the pangs of dissolution,
Calm as if on heaven's throne,
He hath found a sweet solution—
Thou shalt not be left alone.

He hath ne'er forgot his mother,
Mid his anguish and his shame;
He is dying; lo, another
Stands beside his suffering frame.

Human sorrow clings to human,
And the two hearts mourn as one;
But the dear voice utters: "Woman,
I am gone—behold thy son!"

The Battle of Gettysburg

Word how sweet—but hark, another
All as sweet, from him shall come,
When he says: “Behold, thy mother!”
Dear disciple, take her home.”

He to whom earth gave no shelter
For his weary head and form,
Left not them to face the welter
And the fury of the storm.

John and Mary—thus provided
With a legacy of love—
Son and mother—undivided
Wait to join with Him above.

NATURAL MUSIC

THE COMING OF EVENING.

"And sweet the coming on
Of evening mild."

—*Milton.*

Slow swing the silent balances of heaven,
The golden sun outweighs the silver moon,
And in the west goes down, while in the east
The lighter orb, a dim-faced disc, ascends,
The sun's pale double, appearing ere his death;
Or like the wan-faced widow, whose frightened eye
Sees where her husband in his blood expires.
And here and there, one bold-ey'd star peeps out
From the night's violet curtains; as child-eyes
Peep from behind the mother's guardian robes.

And now becomes the western mountain range
A Sinai, black but crown'd with cloud and fire,
A martyr-face, turn'd black amid the flame.

And now, the furnace-chimney's iron blast
Reveals its sulphurous glow against the dark,
And flames, like lions, leap forth in the night.

And now the clock, high in the minster-tower,
Begins to show its luminous features, like
A face that shines more angel-bright in woe;
A face on which Time travels his sure round,
But leaves no footmark; or, like Stephen's face,
In death-shade radiant with the splendor of God,
As if he saw it with immortal eyes.

And now, the splendid evening occident,
A horizontal band of fiery gold,
Is seen behind the ranged trunks of trees,
Between their darkening foliage above,
And slope of darkening mother-land below.

The Battle of Gettysburg

Heraldic blazon of the buried sun;
Like flash of stained windows 'thwart the nave,
Behind the ancient line of Gothic shafts;
Or, like high pillars of the Parthenon,
Back'd by Ægæan sea, Hellenic sky.

And ever as the earth grows dark, in heaven
The grand assembly of the nightly stars
Comes at the shepherd-call of God—that God
Who calls them all by name, nor one is lost,
Upon the stormless pastures of the sky.
O strange, dark, solemn, silent fields of God;
No fields of man are gemmed so thick with flowers,
As ye with ever-blossoming, faithful stars;
They make the old heavens an highway strewn with
flowers,

To celebrate the triumph-march of God.

Now sleeps the mountain, in the moonlight veil'd;
Now sleeps the broad gulf, in the moonlight fair;
Now sleep the forests, for the winds are laid;
Now sleep the birds, and music sleeps with them.

And he who from the mountain views the vale,
May see it, as with silver liquid, fill'd
With misty moonlight, to the mountain's brim.
And he, across hush'd fields that wanders slow,
Can hear the long breath of the couchant kine,
In the mild darkness—like a sound of home.

Now, busy Memory hath gone far afield,
'And like a bee, comes richly laden home,
Triumphant with the spoil of thousand flowers.

O Memory: yield the fragrance and the sweet,
Which thou hast gathered from the days of bloom,
To cheer autumnal days of wither'd hope.

"SUNT QUOS JUVAT."

One joys to catch Ionian chords, how Hektor
 Stood forth at last, for Ilion to die;
And one, to learn how far the radius vector
 Will sling a planet o'er the middle sky.

One loves to dream, beneath Hellenic azure,
 By shafts of Pæstum or of Parthenon;
One finds a poet's or a prophet's pleasure,
 In finials of Milan or Cologne.

One would call up the old sea-fights Ægæan,
 And thrill his spirit by the clash of oars;
And one would ease his pain in that Lethean
 Stream, that doth make no music on our shores.

One loves to plunge in the abyss with Dante;
 To meet Tartarean hate, demoniac smiles;
And one would sail the summer seas, where Zante
 Shines fairest far, of all the sister isles.

One heart still muses on the art of Florence,
 And dreams the beauties that are lost in words;
While one cannot forget the Norway torrents,
 That roar, and flash, and whiten to the fyords.

One loves the master-music; the Teutonic
 Grand minnesingers smite him to the soul;
He bathes himself within the flood harmonic,
 Whose rhythmic waves from unsail'd oceans roll.

With Ivanhoe, how one delights to break spear
 On Norman, or on Templar, in the joust;
Another roams in fairy-land, with Shakespeare,
 And takes the mighty fantasies on trust.

* * * * * *

The Battle of Gettysburg

Beneath our woods and meadows, buried ages
Lie folded on each other, leaf on leaf,
And when we count their slowly-printed pages,
How thin our generations seem, how brief.

Lo, Memory stands beside her crumbling altar,
And, if she could, would wake a little blaze;
Vain is the beckoning of her hands that falter,
To those now disappearing, golden days.

Days sweet, because days past ; henceforth unchang-
ing ;
Like dimming script upon an arch of time,
Oblivion love may find, but ne'er estranging,
For truth is truth, though hid by ages' grime.

For love is love, through geologic changes,
Which are but spindrift on the eternal sea ;
And love burns on, when Appalachian ranges
Shall sink, and leave again the Atlantic free.

Yet love behind the haze of time is dimming,
And veils itself in solemn blue afar ;
Like serried mountains, all the horizon rimming,
Till they by morning-red transfigured are.

And when the twilight deepens to the gloaming,
And mountains darken in the dying west,
The thoughts of love, like weary pigeons homing,
Fly homeward to a lonely, waiting breast.

Youth's harvest past, when painful age is gleaning
The lonely remnants on a dark'ning field,
If love be not, what can give weight and meaning
To all the little that our earth can yield?

A DICHORDON.

But who can awaken the sound again,
That thrilled from the Memmon-stone?
Can even the harper's hand regain
The tune, when the strings are gone?
Though th' exiled king may return to reign,
And resume a lonelier throne,
Yet the hero that lies in the mound of slain
Cannot hear how the people moan.
Lo, the minster organ's long refrain
May thunder, or warble, or groan,
O'er the dead who for ages and ages have lain
In their coffins grand and lone;
But the dead are deaf, and still remain,
No stirring of brand or bone,
Though the pictur'd window's glory-stain
On their marble tombs is thrown.
Lo, the bird, having fled from the cold and rain,
Is forever and ever flown;
And its sweet and brief ærial strain
Is gone, where the winds have blown.
The sunset-gleams on the ocean-plain,
And its glow on the mountain-cone,
Shall shine again, on mountain and main,
As in ages afar they have shone;
And around the pole shall swing the wain,
As it swang ere man was known;
And the evening star shall lead the train,
Though it seem to ascend alone;
But the pillars that fall from the ruin'd fane
Shall lie in the desert prone;
And the oak, that shadowed the plough-worn swain,
Lies north, by the whirlwind strown;
And the anchor that dropt from the broken chain
Shall sleep, with the shells o'ergrown;

The Battle of Gettysburg

And the berg, that carries the old moraine,
Will be lost in the summer zone.
So the love-lit eyes, at the cottage-pane,
Can watch no more for their own;
And if tears on a coffin may fall like rain,
Can they for the wrong atone?

A MONOCHORD.

Nor laboring hands nor praying breath
Can halt the iron march of death;
World heap'd on world thine eyes shall see,
Nature expire in agony;
As poor untimely fruit is cast
By trees that shake beneath the blast,
When all the winds are free.

Then sounding o'er the ruin'd whole,
The voice of God shall call thy soul:
The famous nations of the dead,
The hands that smote, the hearts that bled;
The dead that people land and sea,
The great, the small, the bond, the free,
Shall then stand up with thee.

Unresting ocean of the soul,
Toward what inevitable goal?
Those shivering waters—will they break
In sea of glass, or fiery lake,
Or gulf of nothingness profound?
A stream suck'd down, that disappears,
From light of suns or lapse of years,
Eternal night, without a sound.

All pilgrims to that purple bourne,
Far-seen by prophet or by Norn:
The dead cut down like grass-flowers shorn,
The dead whom coronets adorn;
The dead whom gold could not suborn,
The dead whose brows were red with thorn,
 O Death, thy victory.
The dead that challenged death with scorn,
In battle-thunder, neigh, and horn;
The Spartans, dead, but not foresworn,
The dead upon the arena torn;
The dead who died with none to mourn,
The alien dead, who died forlorn;
 All these ascending, see.
The dead who died with age outworn,
The baby, dead before the morn;
The dead that hide beneath the corn,
The dead whom saintly shrines adorn;
The dead that died ere Christ was born,
The dead that die that latest morn;
 Shall all take rank with thee.

ON LONG ISLAND SOUND.

Back into the night behind us
 Stretches ghostly wake of foam,
Like that murmurous path of memory
 By which our lives have come.

The mariner's guiding lamp
 Quivers on the low shore,
Between the darkening arch of heaven
 And ocean's darkening floor.

The Battle of Gettysburg

A band of sunset purple,
And a flaming orange band,
Alternate cloud and clearness,
From zenith unto strand.

The purple darkened denser,
The orange flame burned low,
And the lonely sea, immenser
Rolled, illimitable flow.

Between that sombre ocean
And that awful dome of sky,
There seems none other being,
God unseen! than Thou and I.

CRAIG VARRA.

I know no fairer form of summer ease
Than calmly spying thro' Craig Varra's trees,
Where the bay, gleaming, spreads into the seas,
And white sails seem to beckon us away.

Craig Varra's trees! a ramp of green,
While here and there, the parted boughs between,
The flashing levels of the flood are seen,
And thro' those vistas far our thoughts may fly.

Behold the sunset orb, a fiery urn,
In flaming clouds and western glory burn,
O'er which the darken'd heaven soon shall mourn,
When falls a silence on the land and sea.

As when flushed beauty dims behind the veil,
The burning heaven is slowly waxing pale;
Below, the splendor from a hundred sail
Fades, as the embers of the sunset die.

Thy trees, Craig Varra, heavenly pointing spires,
Lead up the eye to those ten thousand fires
That will not burn until the sun retires;
The scattered beacons on creation's shore.

The sound the wavelets and the pebbles make,
Or that which breezes in the tree-tops wake;
Which lullaby, O weary, wilt thou take?
O give me both, for both are sweet to hear.

I'd sleep among the tree-tops' sighing lone,
And wake unwearied by its monotone,
To hear the tide make music on the stone—
Sooth'd by the whisper of the wind and wave.

'Art thou not happy, highly-favored guest,
If on thine own those gracious lips are prest?
Such welcome, words alone have ne'er exprest,
As thou hast found within Craig Varra's halls.

THE SPY'S PASSAGE OVER THE ALPS.

(From Manzoni.)

I bent me toward the north, and leaving quite
The beaten paths, within a narrow vale,
A vale obscure, I took my way; but as
My steps went onward more, so to my view
More spacious grew the vale. Here I discerned

The Battle of Gettysburg

Flocks wandering, and shepherds' huts; here was
The dwelling-place extreme of mortals: I went in
Sought shepherd's hospitality, and then
On woolly pelts I rested through the night.
Arisen at morn, I asked the way to France,
Of that kind herd; "Beyond those mountains'
 throng'd

Are mountains more, (said he) and others still;
And far, O far away is France; and road
Is none; a thousand are those mountains, all
Steep, bare, tremendous, uninhabited,
Save by the spirits; and never mortal man
O'er them hath trod"—"The paths of God are
 many,

Far more than those of mortal," I replied;
"And God sends me." "And God may guide thee,
 too,"

He said, then, of what bread he held in store
So much he took as a wayfarer might
Go laden with; and in rough sack enwrapp'd,
Upon my shoulders laid. The guerdon then
Of heaven I prayed for him, and took my way.
That valley's head I reached, I climbed a pass,
And, in God trusting, traveled it. Here none
Was trace of man apparent; forests only,
Of untouch'd pines, rivers unknown, and vales
Without a path: in silence all; naught else
Than mine own steps I heard, and now and then
The roll of torrents, or the unforeseen
Whir of the hawk or eagle, from the steep
Nest launch'd upon the morn, with whizzing sound
Pass o'er my head; or, at the noon-tide hour,
The cones of forest pines, touch'd by the sun,
Rustled. And thus for three days traveled I;
And under the thick foliage, in the cliffs,
Three nights I rested. My guide was the sun;

I rose with him, and so his journey too
I followed, toward his setting turn'd. Unsure,
Yet, of the road I was, from vale to vale
Passing o'er ridges ever, or if sometimes,
Some pass of practicable slope I saw
Arise before me, and attained its top
Other far loftier peaks, before, around,
Stood far above me still; others, with snow
From summit unto base white-glistening,
Like steep sharp tabernacles, fix'd on ground;
Others, of iron hardness, rear'd in guise
Of walls unscalable.—The third sun's light
Had failed, when a great mountain I discerned,
Which o'er the others raised its brow, and was
Entire one verdant slope, and to its top
Was crowned with greenery. Toward that part
I soon had turned my step.—It was the side,
The orient side, of this same mountain here,
On which, but opposite the setting sun,
Thy camp is fixed, O king.—In mountain-folds,
The darkness gathered me; the dry, soft leaves,
Of which the pines had been despoiled, and which
Spread thick the ground, my couch; its canopy
Most ancient trunks of trees. A smiling hope
Awoke me at the morning light, and full
Of vigor fresh I climbed the mountain-side.
Scarcely its height I gained, when from afar,
Seeming to come, a murmuring touched mine ear;
Deep sound, with no cessation; then I stood,
And listened motionless; 'twas not the stream,
Broken 'mid rocks far down; 'twas not the wind
Which came against the woods, and whistling passed
From one to another, but in very truth,
A murmur of the living, an indistinct
Sound of the words and works and of the feet
Trampling far off, a stirring-up immense

The Battle of Gettysburg

Of men; my heart leaped up within; my steps
I hastened. On that peak, O king, which seems
To us from here a long and keen-set ridge
To cleave the sky, like to a sharpen'd axe,
Lies a broad table-land, whose herbage thick
Hath ne'er before been trod. O'er this I took
What transit was most brief: each moment, still
The sounding grew more near; I swallowed up
The remnant of the way; I reached the edge,
I shot my glance far down into the vale,
I saw,—I saw,—the tents of Israel,
The long'd-for camp of Jacob; prone on ground,
I thanked my God, I blessed him, and came here.

SUMMER DAYS.

Oh, for the summer days;
With robes of gladsome green—
When the flowers look up with wondering eyes,
Thro' the endless deeps of the brooding skies,
In the sungold, blue, and sheen.

Joy for the summer days:
With warm and fragrant breath;
For the hills are bright and the clouds are gold,
And the gates of life their treasures unfold;
Unseen are the gates of death.

Hail to the summer days:
Children of rosy Dawn;
With their mother's kiss in their foreheads fair,
And their mother's gold in their shining hair,
Tho' the mother's stars are gone.

Grand are the summer days:
The old earth's wordless song;
For she sings to herself of the time to come,
Of a king to return like a husband home,
To make her new and strong.

Mourn for the summer days:
For the summer days must die;
And the black-rob'd blasts shall sing their hymn,
And the leaves shall fall from the forest dim
Like the tears from a mother's eye.

Tears for the summer days:
For the song and the beauty o'er;
They are gone like the joy of an eye now dead,
Or the gold on the wing of a bird that fled,
Through storm—to a shadowy shore.

Wait for the summer days:
That will not pass away;
Till the gates are wide to the innermost heaven,
And the glory bursts thro' the portals riven,
Unsetting summer day.

BOLD ROBIN.

Robin bold, and red of breast,
Come, and build a-near thy nest;
Liveried courier of the spring,
Let us joy to hear thee sing.

Redbreast, are the mornings cold?
Yet thy little heart is bold;
While the stiffen'd fields are plowed,
Let us hear thee call aloud.

The Battle of Gettysburg

Thou wilt see the roses soon,
Sing to sleep the morning moon;
While thou waitst for cherries ripe,
Let us hear thy gladsome pipe.

Robin, singular wast thou;
Hast become a plural now.
Busy, weary, canst thou rest,
On that crowded, noisy nest?

Robin, Robin, that red breast
Leans like sunset o'er the nest,
While each little beak is spread,
Screaming for the daily bread.

Aye, to thee they're lovely things,
Growing songs and growing wings;
Robin, there will come a day
When thy loves are fled away.

THRICE FAIR.

The twilight-silence loves the far-off bell;
Yet ere this day, my day with thee, depart,
May I not find some music-words, to tell
Thee once for all, how beautiful thou art.

Thou art more beautiful than flying foam,
That decks the sea-breast with an edge of storm.
While plunging steeds of ocean's hippodrome
Cærulean darkness into light transform.

and Other Poems

More beautiful than is the shell that lies
Where golden sands and singing waters meet;
Whose volute, faintly blush'd with tender dyes,
May match the rosy radiance of thy feet.

More beautiful than is the aisle of green,
That wins the eye into the forest deep;
Where sunlight wanders to make shade or sheen,
Or, like a spent child, strays and falls asleep.

The ripening years have formed thee what thou art,
Yet scarcely left their story on thy brow;
Ages have drained the dripping mountain's heart,
To form stalactites far less fair than thou.

More beautiful than gilded cloud of even,
Where vanish'd sun prolongs his dying gleam;
Repeats his glory in the glooming heaven,
Itself repeated in the silent stream.

Those few great stars that I am watching now,
That stand unveil'd beside the growing moon,
Are beautiful, O Love, not more than thou;
But O, their beauty will not dim so soon.

Thine outward charm, the acme of a flower;
Thine inward beauty is the starry ray;
The one sheds bloom and fragrance on an hour;
Beyond Orion shall the other stay.

Can aught be fairer than the orchard-May,
When shell-tint blossoms load the fragrant
bough?

He that beholds thee cannot choose but say:
"Yes; one is fairer, Love, and it is thou."

The Battle of Gettysburg

The tender glory of the dawning sea,
The birds that bring and sing the summer now,
The spread of morning-diamonds on the lea;
One charms us from them all; Love, it is thou.

PICTURES FROM GREEK URNS.

MEDEA.

I am that one that left her golden home,
O'er Pontic and Propontic salt to roam,
To dash through spindrift, surge, and quivering
foam,
Through countless ranks of waves that climb and
comb,
And past the gunwale race.

Bethinks me, how through boiling wave and scum,
Forth went the oars and back, as through the thrum
The weaver's shuttle flies; and I sat dumb,
(While ringing winds in rattling cordage hum)
And gazed on Jason's face.

How ought I never to have left the shore,
And dared the stinging blast and thunder-roar,
(O golden Kolchis, shall I see thee more?)
Of waves that toss and climb and break and pour,
And sway the rushing keel.

I heard them say: "Let not too far
Go seaward down the leaning spar,
Lest we be like the tilted car,
On one wheel turning round the bar,
In air one swinging wheel."

How roared Euroklydon, to urge
Our bows against the hissing surge;
How plunge the timbers and emerge,
Like Neptune's horses at the scourge;
The dark-blue, solemn plunge.

The Battle of Gettysburg

Ah, memory, thy lures withhold,
Or I shall love him as of old;
Be firm, my will, my heart, be cold,
Pass into darkness, days of gold,
My soul, prepare revenge.

And when we scraped the Dorian shores,
The clash and thud of unshipp'd oars
Resounded hollow; while from scores
Of sea-beat men the pæan roars;
Each man,—a demigod.

Then, what a welcome to the land,
When Jason took me by the hand,
And lifted me across the strand,
Nor let me print my foot on sand—
As on a cloud I rode.

Ah, fool, that all my witchcraft could not tell
How Jason's whispers that I loved so well,
Were lies; as little knoweth he, how fell
The drops of vengeance in my heart that dwell—
On him and his distill.

The salt spray on my face, how soon it dried;
The salt tears on my cheeks, how they abide;
And 'neath those tears, the fires of vengeance hide,
Bowels of flame 'neath Ætna's snowy side;
Wake, vengeance, tears, be still.

The hands that fastened thole to thong,
The backs that swayed, like saplings strong,
The rhythm of oarage and of song—
Like moon through cloud, we swept along—
O, my triumphant will.

Each Argonaut, sublimely brave,
What was he but my galley-slave,
To whirl me o'er the subject wave,
Mistress of all that life could crave,
And shall I crouch to doom?

Passing the stern Symplegadès,
The sea became a hundred seas;
What cared I,—since he found his ease
With head upon my waiting knees,
'Mid winds and billows' boom?

They prate of their Eumenidès,
Of vengeful gryphons o'er yon seas,
How Gorgon-eyes the marrow freeze;
I am more terrible than these:
I am the love that hates.

Herbs, garner'd 'neath the rounded moon,
The night-hags, with their curse and croon,
Bestowed on me—their bridal boon:
Ho, Jason, wilt thou taste them soon?
Canst thou cajole the Fates?

IPHIGENIA.

Like thousand sheep in meadow, lay
A thousand ships in Aulis bay;
A thousand masts at morning shine,
A thousand fade at day's decline;
At mid-day, o'er the windless flood,
A thousand masts like pillars stood
Up-springing from the blue below
Toward that far, upper blue they go.

The Battle of Gettysburg

And when the buskin'd huntress grand
Sped silver shafts o'er the sea and land,
And kindled all her waxing horn,
The torch of heaven, that burns till morn,
Unsleping Agamemnon's eye
A thousand masts could yet descry;
For, like a leafless forest, there
They glimmered in the windless air.

The shadow'd ships, how silently
Reflected in the silent sea:
So standing like a thousand isles,
Sea-spaced between their ranks and files,
And each sea-space, a still lagoon
Rend'ring whole-imaged sun or moon,
Each bulwark, ranged with shields of brass,
Down-mirror'd as in sea of glass.

Each glorious line of fiery shields
Repeated in the azure fields;
While straight from every shield, a spear
Upstanding, slim and tall and sheer,
Like shaft of light, if only one,
Ascending from the buried sun;
A glittering point, o'er gleaming shield,
Like star o'er moon, on heaven's field.

But shield and spear, and mast and oar,
Still as the rocks that wall the shore;
Where scarce the wave can swell and fall
Enough to streak the rock at all;
And, gently creeping for the beach,
The wilting sea-weed fails to reach.
And silent is the lisping hymn
That's murmured on the ocean's brim.

and Other Poems

That sea, which men said could not rest ;
That deep, dark, ancient, throbbing breast,
Lies still around the pictur'd fleet,
As ocean's heart had ceased to beat.
And while that mighty breast is numb,
That voice of countless song is dumb,
Sweet Muses, grant me one more song,
And turn to music this my wrong.

Ah, Linus, thou the song canst hear,
Song of the swan, in hundredth year.
Sure, once I heard, in days agoe,
The music of the dying swan ;
But five such lives as mine are fain
To pass, ere that be heard again.
Ah, music rare as that might be
A funeral-wail condign for me.

Religion, doth thine ancient name
Stand sponsor for this crime and shame?
Do gods, or goddesses, or God,
Demand my beauty and my blood?
Men call me beautiful, and I,
Who must for grander beauty die,
All beauteousness can only hate,
To me a dowry of dark fate.

But wherefore not to me, in whom
Is now fulfilled Tantallic doom?
King's daughter on the pyre am I,
Up-gazing into soft, sweet sky.
How strange the earth, how strange the sea :
How strange are all things unto me :
The sky, a field of dappled fawns,
Sweet pasture and sweet flock of dawn's.

The Battle of Gettysburg

The moon—her nightly voyage o'er,
A bright shell on a sapphire shore;
The sun, impatient with desire
To spread the ocean-plain with fire;
Bright-growing as a burnish'd shield
That boundless, windless ocean-field.
But every star has crept away,
And left me to my dying day.

I am the bride of victor Death,
Who soon shall claim my sacred breath;
So let them count my life by drops,
Until the thin red fountain stops.
This heart's an urn o'erset, from which
Must flow libation red and rich;
Mine the first blood by Ilion shed,
I lead the train of Argive dead.

Achaian, Argive, Myrmidon,
Remember me when I am gone
When ye have passed the Icarian flood,
Remember me, and this my blood;
'Fore Skaian gate, and Dardan wall,
Remember, here ye saw me fall:
By Simois' whorl, Skamander's wave,
Remember her ye could not save.

HER DEATH-SONG.

O father high:
Surrender me to die;
For I shall blazon Agamemnon's name,
A constellation, every age the same.

and Other Poems

O mother strong,
Avenge not this my wrong;
For I, with death's prophetic eye, can see
The days of darkness that will rise for thee.

O brother sure,
No love as mine so pure
Shall ever be the portion of thy soul,
Long as the chariot-days of life may roll.

O sister sweet,
Turn thou away thy feet;
Why shouldst thou, heiress of the blossoming years,
O'erspread thy sky with this grey mist of tears?

Pelidès, thou,
With thunder on thy brow,
Go, bear thy vengeance to the shuddering gates,
Where Ilion from thy hand her ruin waits.

Now must I tell
The holy sound, Farewell,
Farewell, Farewell, and with a virgin moan,
I meet the threefold champion, and am gone.

ANDROMACHE.

Is there a radiance on my brow?
My soul hath skill prophetic now;
Not Kalchas, nor the Theban seer,
Can see the unseen things more clear.
I see where Hector on the plain
Rolls back the Argive host amain:
The torch: like dark-red moon's eclipse;
The cry: "'Ware Hector at the ships."

The Battle of Gettysburg

Oh, fierce, unconquerable joy,
Of battle 'neath the towers of Troy:
Great chieftain, how thy puissant hand
Whirls swift and high the fateful brand:
Red-rushing as the hairy star,
Thou rollest ruin from thy car;
Like Zeus, with thunder-bearing hand,
Thou hurlest death on sea and land.

I see thee, on thy path of ire,
Rush, like Erinnys, arm'd with fire;
Between the ship-stakes and the wall
I hear thy deep, commanding call;
High in the rush of booming cars,
I see thee aim against the spars;
The crackling, furious torch is cast
Sublime against the tilted mast.

I hear that spirit-thrilling crash,
The sound of the long, quivering ash,
Against the stakes, against the shield,
'Gainst all that fronts thee in the field.
O joy, to watch thy gleaming form
Rush through the Danai like a storm,
And tear them from their towers with ease,
Like wind that strips the wailing trees.

'Twas then ye loud-voiced Danai quailed;
Ye knew not Hektor when ye sailed.
If ye had seen his sword alone,
And heard the thunder of his tone,
And with the thunder-stone that blazed
Where'er his potent arm was raised:
Your prayers to all the gods had yearned
That Aulis' wind had never turned;

EOS.

The white, tremendous, wallowing team
Toss clouds of foam from Atlas' stream,
And, faintly ros'd with western light,
They march to meet the ascending night.
For, where the chariot's path of light
Divides that rising wall of night,
Beyond Abylè's columns far,
Each night renews the ancient war;
Somewhere, upon the ebon plain,
The primal conflict wakes again;
Somewhere, upon the ebon plain,
The hero-steeds of light are slain;
And o'er their billowing, bellowing graves
The tomb of darkness domes the waves.

Nay, somewhere, in Plutonian deep,
The steeds of glory do but sleep,
And Eos' whisper they shall hear,
When Phosphor's lamp is kindled clear:
Soon, from her subterranean stall,
They snort, and stamp her pillar'd hall.
Their hoof-beats, in impatient halt,
Resound like thunder in the vault,
And through the long columnar rooms
Are soundings as when ocean booms.
See, where their mistress grand, alone,
And high, ascends her chariot-throne,
They rise flame-ey'd, like ruddy Mars,
And ramp to charge the cloudy bars.
Then, with reverberating neigh,
Spring forth, as lions, at the prey.
With joy of battle in their eyes,
To chase the darkness from the skies;

The Battle of Gettysburg

With joy of battle in their breast,
To chase the darkness, east and west.
With thunder-march, through heaven to go,
And seek the night, their ancient foe;
Then, victors, find their bath again,
Down-rolling to the purple main.
And fling to foam the heaping seas,
Beyond thy pillars, Hercules.
The steeds star-fronted—hear them champ:
The steeds of dawn-glow—see them ramp:
The glory of their nostrils pours
Cloud-vapours, bright to Erebus shores;
While hoof and axle dash the spray
On Calpe's haughty forehead gray.

Meanwhile, and far away, the dark
Invades Caucasian mountains stark;
Where hovering Oceanids,
Beyond Ionian, Pontic seas,
Would fain Promethean woes beguile,
With Ocean's countless song and smile

A FRAGMENT FROM ÆSCHYLUS.

(To be read with "Eos.")

—And where the Erythræan main
Extends its flood, a purple plain;
The Æthiopians, that teem
With all things, by the ocean-stream;
The flashing lake with brazen gleam;
There, where the all-beholding sun
Still drives his steeds immortal down,
And where their weary limbs he laves,
In warm baths of the gentle waves.

PERSEPHONE.

The far-off, unforgotten, sun-bright hours:
Then, from my fallen tunic, fell the flowers,
 The sunny, shining asphodels.
O mother, is the vale of Enna now
As bright as when I roamed it, yes, and thou;
We bound the coronet upon my brow,
 Of gather'd golden asphodels.

I dream it still, that azure crystalline,
In all the sky beyond the mountain seen,
 The sun-gold, flashing o'er the vale;
The moaning pines, the harpers of the hills,
The crag, o'er which the lisping stream distils,
The urn of fire, in middle heaven, that fills
 With golden fire my Enna vale.

Dark were the chariots, mother, dark the way,
Swift darkness that o'er swept the golden day—
 The day that I was reft from thee;
'Tween sun and me swift rolled a vast eclipse,
A shade that hushed the song upon my lips;
And I was whirled, like leaf the tempest strips,
 Great mother, when I passed from thee.

Great mother, I have found how much alone
May be a heart uplifted on a throne;
 I weep for thy remembered breast;
Where Acheron and where Cocytus booms
(No asphodel upon their margin blooms)
I reign among a thousand grisly dooms;
 Thy daughter, homeless for thy breast.

The Battle of Gettysburg

The crown is rusting on my sombre brow.
My starry beauty has vanished now,
 With which the vale of Enna shone;
My tunic where? that let the blossoms fall,
For this great robe encumbers like a pall;
Might I change places with the lowliest thrall,
 To glean the fields where Enna shone.

In these dread courts, forgotten by the sun,
Where all things glimmer purple, drear, and dun,
 No herald star presages morn;
And these swart dimly-cipher'd columns here,
More ghastly than the shivering tree-trunks sere,
That leafless stand through long night o' the year,
 But whisper of a vernal morn.

If thou shouldst find me, wouldst thou know me
 now?
Imperial gloom was alien from my brow,
 When I was sweet Persephone;
This purple hair flew golden as the corn
On Ætna's flank: these dark, dark eyes forlorn,
Blue as the wave from which was beauty born—
 Now I am grand Persephone.

Ah, mother; better to be sweet than grand,
And better to be loved than to command;
 Thy bosom than the purple throne.
O love and beauty lost: O dying gleam
Of sunset-splendor on the vivid stream,
That fell through darkness to the land of dream,
 To flow by death's immortal throne.

Where was that vale wherein I used to dwell;
That vale of wings, songs, sun, and asphodel,

Where was that fragrant and that golden
vale?

There, where a weary, golden head could rest,
Upon a mother's deep and waiting breast,
And hear the glad wind singing from the west,
To Ætna's mountain, Enna's vale.

Where was that hill I loved with thee to climb?
Thy tone was music and thy words were rhyme,
We turned our fresh eyes to the morn;
And ere the sun, there breathed to thee and me,
Never again, alas, to breathe on me,
Sweet breathings of the pure and amarant sea,
With rays from rosy-vested morn.

SHIELD-BEARING—SHIELD-BORNE.

Still at last the bristling field,
Westward has the sun-car wheeled;
Bear him homeward on his shield,
Hide not scar on cheek and brow—
Youthful beauty counts not now.

He hath broke the grim phalanx,
Thunderbolt that smote the ranks;
Now where dead are heaped in banks,
Ye shall find him, marred, but fair—
Let the shield its bearer bear.

Hammering sword and anvil mail,
Chaff of men and War his flail,
Storm of death with arrowy hail—
These to him have left the field,
Bear him homeward on his shield.

The Battle of Gettysburg

Ah, no Tearless Victory this!
She, who many a year shall miss
Her bright hero's quickening kiss—
Death hath oped a fount of tears
In her soul, to flow for years.

Metal splendor he had on,
Fiery helm, habergeon;
Now the inner Splendor's gone.
Lay the sword he ne'er may wield
O'er his body on the shield.

Head hung back, beyond the rim,
Balanced by o'erhanging limb,
Gently, grandly, bear ye him!
Hark! the distant trumpets pealed!
March like angels from the field.

Rhesus of the shining car,
Great Sarpedon, borne afar,
Memnon, child of morning-star—
Hail your comrade of the field,
Sacred burden of the shield.

THE FLASH OF THE FALL OF TROY.

(From the "Agamemnon" of Æschylus.)

'Twas that relay of telegraphic flame
Which flashed the fall of Troy across the deep:
From Ida's height the blazing signal came,
Kindling on Lemnos at a flying leap;
Thence on to Athos' promontory steep
Till o'er the sea-wave gleamed the crackling pine,

and Other Poems

And cheered Makistos' guards, who dared not
sleep;
Far forth again, o'er Euripus' dark brine,
And to Messapios' heights, stretched on the fiery
line.

Messapios' watchmen lit their heathery pile,
Which, moon-like, past Asopos' valley shone;
Kithairon's summit, distant many a mile,
Next caught the herald-flame that hurried on;
Nor yet the flying fire its goal had won,
But restless, sprang across Gorgopis' flood,
To where, on Aigioplanktos' summit lone,
With ready brands the faithful watchmen stood
Alert, to speed the tale of Troy extinct in blood.

The peak that overlooks Saronic gulf
Next kindles with its monumental pyre
Whose sudden blaze alarms the midnight wolf,
Prowling the mountain-woods; and still the fire
Pursues its airy track, and will not tire;
To Arachnaios' height it darts aloof,
Telling with tongue of flame its message dire,
And she who ten slow years had sought that proof,
Saw its red letters die, from Agamemnon's roof.

FIRST CHORUS OF THE AGAMEMNON OF ÆSCHYLUS.

CHANTED BY A BAND OF AGED MEN.

The years to their decade have come,
Since Priam's mighty doom,
The kingly brothers, yok'd as one,
(From Jove their double staff and throne)

The Battle of Gettysburg

Menelaos with his brother's aid,
In thousand Argive ships array'd,
From this our coast
Led up their martial host.
"Great Mars," their eager spirits roar;
Like the shriek of eagles, which, far o'er
In wandering grief for brood distress,
Whirling in rings,
And mov'd with oarage of their wings,
Bemoan the nest,
The lost brood, and the couch they pressed.
And some Apollo, listening high
(Or Pan or Zeus) to the shrill bird-cry,
Wail of these aliens of the sky,
Doth send, tho' late,
On their despoilers, furious fate.

The sons of Atreus thus our lord
Zeus, the defender of the board,
To Alexander sends, in strife
For her, the polyandrous wife.
He many grapplings and sore stress
Of laboring knees in dust that press,
With shards of many a shiver'd lance,
Will bring on Danaoi's first advance;
On Trojan hosts no less.
And such as this, our present state,
And thus accomplished is our fate.
Nor pouring tears shall e'er assuage,
Nor pouring wine, the fiery rage.

We, honorless in age outworn,
Of that great armament forlorn,
In child-like feebleness abide,
And on our staves our footsteps guide.
Young marrow, moving in the breast,

Is but as age, at best,
While Mars, for them, is far abroad;
So he that's over-old, whose head
Already hath its foliage shed,
Walks on his triple-footed road,
And wanders on his childish way,
A dream appearing in the day.

Tyndareus' daughter, thou;
Queen Clytemnestra now:
What news? what hast thou heard?
By what reported word
Dost thou send sacrifices round
For all the gods that guard our ground?
The gods below, the gods on high,
Gods of the market and the sky,
With gifts their altars blaze.
One here, one there, to reach the sky,
The torch uplifts its rays;
Full-fed with the anointment clear,
The gentle, genuine good cheer,
The royal oil-cake, brought out here.
Of these things, O that thou wouldst tell
What's right, and possible as well;
Become a healer of this care,
Which sometimes verges to despair;
Bright hope, from sacrifices born,
Sometimes fends off the thought forlorn,
The grief that hath the spirit worn.

Lo, I the fateful might can say,
Of heroes, god-spiced on their way;
For yet my life the god prolongs,
And breathes persuasion on my songs:
That winged omen doth command
Young Hellas 'gainst the Teukrid land,

The Battle of Gettysburg

With spear and with avenging hand;
The Achæans might, of double throne,
Twin chieftains, but whose thoughts are one:
Bird-kings, one dark, one white in rear,
Unto the kings of ships appear
O'er housetops, on spear-shaking hand,
In seats conspicuously grand,
Feasting on hare enlarged with young—
In her last race she met the wrong.
Ah, Linus, and, Ah, Linus, wail;
But let the right prevail:

The army-prophet, wise of heart,
Saw the bold Atrids stand apart;
He knew what meant the slaughter'd hare,
A convoy to the leaders there;
And thus divining spake:
"This march shall Priam's city take,
At length; but not till Doom shall spoil
The tower'd wealth of people's toil.
May no grudge from the gods disturb
The great, fore-hammer'd army-curb:
Chaste Artemis doth hold in ire
This house, and wing'd hounds of her sire,
Who, with her offspring, slew the hare,
The woful creature, ere she bare—
The goddess hates the eagles' fare.
Ah, Linus, and, Ah, Linus, wail;
But let the right prevail:

With kindly eyes doth Jove's fair maid
Regard the whelps of lions dread;
And all the young of every beast
That haunts the wild and loves the breast;
Of these it is her will
The gladsome omens to fulfil—

Omens, some good—some blamed for ill.
And now to Paian mine appeal
I make—who hath the power to heal:

Lest she some baffling winds should raise,
To hold the ships in long delays;
An off'ring lawless, strange she speeds,
Which hath no feast, but quarrels breeds,
And alienated wife:

For, dread recurrent vengeance bides,
Dark, mindful, in the house that hides,

Wrath for a daughter's life."
Such fates (with great goods) Kalehas cried,
Must royal palaces betide;

Foretold by birds on wing:

With these harmonious sing:

"Ah, Linus, and, Ah, Linus, wail,
And may the right prevail."

Zeus, whosoe'er he be,
If this name grateful be,
Such be his name from me;
I have no skill to guess
Measuring the more and less,
But Zeus, if I in truth would roll
This helpless burden from my soul.
Not he that in old times was great,
With bold, all-daring force elate,
Can now suffice,—his day is done;
And who thereafter came, that one
Hath met his conqueror, and is gone.

Who clangs to Zeus the song with zeal,
As victor shall have all his will.

Zeus guided men in wisdom's path,
Ornained the law that knowledge hath

Its way in sorrow still.

The Battle of Gettysburg

Before the heart distil in sleep
The drops of pain, in memory deep;
They learned, who had thereto no will.
From gods such favor well might seem,
Who hold, by power, the seat supreme.

Grave admiral of Achaian ships
(No blame for prophet on his lips)
Consenting to the forceful fates,
What time the Achaian folk bewails
Its wasted stores and idle sails,
Beyond the bay of Chalkis waits
In Aulis' counter-current straits.

Then, then from Strymon rush the gales;
While speed, with food and anchorage, fails,
Men, ships and cordage fail in strength,
And time is stretched to double length,
And fades and falls the Argive flower—

But when the seer forecast
(By Artemis her power)
To stay the bitter blast,
A plan to bring relief
More bitter to the chief:
Th' Atrides then were fain
To smite their staves upon the ground,
Nor could the tear restrain.
The aged monarch's words resound:
"If I shall not obey,
How heavy is my doom:

And heavy, if my child I slay,
The splendor of my home;
My father-hands at th' altar stain,
With streaming blood of virgin slain.
And which of these is void of woe?

How shall I, a deserter, go,
And from the alliance fail?
The sacrifice that stays the storm,
The flowing blood from virgin-form,
'Tis right to seek with passion warm:
So may the right prevail."

When he put on the yoke of fate,
Breathed from his soul an impious change,
Impure, contaminate,
Then turned his thought to daring strange.
For, wretched, mad, ill thoughts embolden
Mortals—source of sorrows olden.
He dared to sacrifice his daughter
In aid of wife-avenging slaughter,
An offering for the fleet—
And all her prayers, and father-cries,
And virgin-age so sweet,
The warrior-chiefs despise.

Then spake the father, after prayer,
That o'er the altar, kid-like, there,
They lift her high and hold her prone,
With all her garments round her thrown,
And guard her mouth and beauteous face,
From uttering doom upon her race.
She, gagged by force from uttering sound,
While saffron garments swept the ground,
Smote all her executioners
With that heart-melting glance of hers,
And as in picture clear, but weak
She now can only long to speak.
Once father's festal halls among,
She sang, with pure and virgin song;
And in dear song did celebrate
Her father's trebly-joyful fate.

The Battle of Gettysburg

What next was, I nor saw nor say—
But Kalchas' arts have had their way.
And Justice moveth on in sorrow
To learn what shall be on the morrow
 Since no deliverance we know,
 With farewell presage let it go,
 As equal with a foretold woe.

O come, clear-rising with the beams of dawn
Prosperity—when these are gone—
This we desire—we, next at hand,
Sole rampart of the Apian land.

HORTUS MORTIS

IN THE GARDEN, A TOMB.

Love, kingly love, hath he with us
 upheld so transient state:
And coldly lies, a murder'd king,
 dethron'd, discoronate?
And where is now the radiance,
 and where is now the song,
That made the June sky brighter,
 and that made the old earth young?

Her voice that said, My love, My one,
 and moved thee to the soul,
Poor heart, no voice that's heard on earth
 remains to make thee whole.
Her eyes that sought thy face and smile,
 full-orb'd attendant lights,
Have waned, to shine for thee no more,
 and thou, ah, moonless nights:

The bird that came from isles afar,
 with thee alone to rest,
Hath leaned her brow upon a thorn,
 in leaning on thy breast;
The bird that came from lands afar,
 for thee alone to sing,
Lay fluttering, a broken heart,
 beneath a broken wing.

In ruinous anger, lo, thou threwst
 a pearly love away;
That bitter memory ruminates,
 through Life's December day.

The Battle of Gettysburg

Lo, anger's fiery beams thy Love's
Icarian wings consumed,
Slow-fluttering, surely down, in gulf
that ne'er repents, entombed.

She had a woman's sacred pride,
maybe she was to blame,
But her heart made song Æolian,
at mention of thy name;
Because the summer's lightning-flash
a moment hurt thine eyes,
Wilt thou forget the long, sweet peace
of gentle summer skies?

The royal gem of old, queen's own,
dissolvéd in fiery wine:
Her ruby heart of love, O man,
was melted into thine.
The goblet now is shattered, oh,
and who can find the gem;
Or who can gather fragrance back
upon the wither'd stem?

The beauty of the pastures, see,
to smoke consumed away;
The yester-bloom and fragrance now
are furnace-crackling hay;
Then let the wither'd bunch of flowers
be trampled deep in mire;
Black ashes on the hearth attest
an unrequited fire.

Seek not the songful fledgelings
in nests of the wither'd year,
Seek not the blooms of May-tide
in lonely forest sere.

and Other Poems

Seek not to stay the wheels of that
 inexorable hearse,
Seek not to right the fuming torch,
 which doom doth once reverse.

Do not men let the broken sword
 in long dishonor rust?
Do not they let the porcelain sherds
 lie gathering heedless dust?
For if the sword be cast away,
 well may the scabbard rust;
And if the love be turned to death,
 well may the heart to dust.

The broken heart, a broken vase,
 can ne'er be whole again;
Your mending is but botch-work,
 'tis a dismal zig-zag stain.
Love hath no palingenesis,
 forbear the piteous quest;
A frozen hand may warm again,
 but not a frozen breast.

Thou hast unloosed the winds of death
 upon a smiling main;
Back to the isle Æolian?
 no welcome there again.
Canst thou make bees to murmur
 upon the Arctic snow?
Canst thou repeat upon the clouds
 the yester-evening glow?

Recall the sunset; yea, turn back
 God's grand kaleidoscope;
Repaint the dimming splendor, on
 the cold far mountain-slope.

The Battle of Gettysburg

The glories of the east and west
 are ne'er relumed in heaven,
New ev'ry morning are His clouds,
 and fresh at ev'ry even.

The meteor-spear that, silent,
 along the zodiac shot,
Go, hurl it backward o'er the signs,
 in light that faileth not.
Four thousand years of silences
 have hushed the Memnon-string:
Go stir the granite stillness there,
 go, whisper to the king.

Put ear to stone, and listen, now;
 the twang, so small and shrill,
That wise men came from far to hear,
 canst thou restore the thrill?
The light that rayed from Pharos-tower,
 an hundred fathoms high,
Will not again bedim the stars
 hung in Canopus' sky.

If love were but the tender down
 upon the gold-fly's wings,
If love were but the trilling note
 the small, lone wood-bird sings;
Yet when that down is rudely reft,
 and when that song is o'er,
Hast thou the strength, the wisdom thou,
 such ruin to restore?

Thou'st heard of him that perished
 in the Alpine slide of snow:
The glacier yielded up his form,
 from that cold long-ago;

and Other Poems

And she, the trembling, grey-hair'd one,
 with widow'd vision dim,
Through frozen years had waited
 for this foretold look at him.

And he was young and fair, through all
 the years of death unchanged;
And she, from bloom to withering,
 through all the years had ranged.
In tears of mother-tenderness
 that aged heart must run,
For (like that Theban woe) the bridegroom
 seemed to be the son.

Stir not the fount of tears again—
 more bitterly it flows;
Dircæan fount it is, new pains
 are mingled with old woes.
When in the heart's deep lake Despair
 its threaten'd rock has thrown,
The winds may stir the waters, but
 they cannot raise the stone.

'And if thou couldst regain thy love,
 and like Althæa's brand,
Though marr'd, yet treasure it again;
 would not thy raging hand,
'Again Althæa's like, hurl back
 the brand in steadfast fire,
No more to be reprieved, till love,
 till tortur'd love expire.

'Alas, the vaster barriers
 between thy love and thee,
Than ranks of shadowy mountains, or
 than leagues of sundering sea;

The Battle of Gettysburg

Alas, the dismal courage of
the self-tormenting soul,
That knew the healing fount of love,
and would not be made whole.

Of all deep things on earth, the heart,
the grave; these are most deep;
Not saturate by all the tears
our best-belov'd can weep.
Of all deep graves of earth and soul,
this, sure, is most profound,
Where buried love is dumb and deaf,
as 'neath the lonely mound.

Thinkst thou there is ordained for thee
one yet tremendous hour,
When that sweet past will rise again,
in all its primal power;
Shall rise, and shine, and seem to live,
and breathe its sacred breath,
But for a moment, then go down
as to the second death.

The face, long-lost, long-sought, in crowds
that for a moment gleamed;
One vivid moment, then was gulfed
in throngs that onward streamed
The patient dog that knew his lord
at last come home from Troy,
'Twas twenty years of sorrow, and
one fatal glint of joy.

O sweetness that will break the heart,
when all that love, at last
Will shine, a moment cognizant,
and be forever past:

and Other Poems

The long, drear day of cloud is done,
the sun reveals his fire
A moment, ere that holy flame
beyond the hills expire.

FOR EVER.

The bloom and the fragrance of yesterday's blossom
Ye may have—but ye never shall hold;
Though the rose was at home on the loveliest bosom
Now the rose and the bosom are cold.

They came and they saw and they loved; they are
gone,
They are driven asunder for aye;
And a death-smitten love each is watching alone,
By an altar whose ashes are gray.

They have met, they have loved, they have parted
forever;
And, as each goeth onward alone,
Name of each by the other is said with a shiver,
With a shiver that ends in a moan.

They have met, they have loved, they have parted
forever;
As the walls of a house rive asunder,
As they fall to the south, to the north, with a quiver,
And the red bolt descends with the thunder.

They have met, and their love is asunder forever,
And all that's between is a tomb—
What tears can avail, or what palsied endeavor,
To reverse the oracular doom?

The Battle of Gettysburg

They have met, they have loved, they have parted
forever,
And the heart is a vessel so frail,
A single rash hand all its beauty may shiver—
To restore it—ah, who shall avail?

See the range that is rent by convulsion of old,
And the ocean is roaring between;
Shall ever the strata go back to their hold,
And the ocean go back from the scene?

They have met, they have loved, they have parted
forever,
And no cycle of years can restore;
Like the waves that have flowed by the rock in the
river,
And shall flow by the rock never more.

They have met, they have loved, they have parted
forever,
Moving farther and farther away;
Till the souls that were given go back to the Giver,
And forever and ever and aye!

THE LOST STAR.

Once on a time—a time now pass'd afar—
A lake was lighted by a golden star,
Which every evening climbed the mountain-bar,

And paced the violet meadows of the night,
And gazed into the lake from heaven's height;
Then the lake shone, and trembled in her light.

and Other Poems

And as the people hail their king, come home,
He hailed her presence in the purple dome,
By lifting countless wavelets, crown'd with foam.

She from her vantage in the midnight skies,
Beams on the lake, and in his deep, dark eyes
Her fair, recurrent image nightly lies.

As Life descended to the lowest grave,
Her light descended to his deepest wave,
And pierced his gloom with power to bless and save.

So the deep lake forgot his ancient gloom,
As risen life forgets the vacant tomb;
Bright lake, sweet star; but now—the final doom.

A deeper darkness than he knew before,
Unrest more wild than that which once he bore;
The star was lost; came not; could shine no more.

So lies the lake, o'ershadow'd and alone,
Joining his waters in an endless moan,
Because the star has left her nightly throne.

His dark, broad bosom heaves and trembles sore,
And thus his wavelets weep along the shore:
"My light, my one dear light, will shine no more."

No more her glory climbs the mountain-rim,
To bless and burnish all his waters dim;
Those waters now intone her funeral hymn.

Lost, lost, for aye, behind the mountain-bar,
A glory gone where many glories are;
Alas, thus life and love are sundered far;
Alas, the lonely lake and vanish'd star.

The Battle of Gettysburg

THE TWO MEMNONS.

Silent, upon his changeless throne,
Through dusty ages sits alone
Memnon, the lord of that sweet tone

Which, ages since, as poets dream,
Sounded to greet the sun's first beam,
Slanting across the sacred stream.

A melody that filled the air,
And floated o'er the desert bare,
Pure as an angel's voice at prayer.

A song of such celestial mirth
As was not chanted, since the earth
Heard morning-stars salute her birth.

For not the Sirens' witching strain,
That swept the sea, with string'd refrain,
And stole the seaman's heart and brain,

Had music sweet as that which rolled
And rang from Memnon's bosom cold,
When sunrise washed his limbs with gold.

The sound, the sound that floated o'er
The Mizraim sand, the Nilus shore,
That sacred song—is heard no more.

Memnonian music—silent now ;
Though Eos' glory gild his brow,
Whose splendors all the earth endow.

As mothers listen, through their tears,
To hear a voice, unheard for years,
So waits the sunlight, when it nears

The throne of this mysterious king,
To hear a song he will not sing—
A music never more to ring.

O, silent statue: calm as fate,
Who breathest neither love nor hate,
Within my heart I find thy mate.

Thron'd in the soul's most shadowy cells,
'Tis there another Memnon dwells,
Nor will he answer potent spells.

Dumb reigns he there, more dumb than stone;
Yet long ago, a light that shone
Through all my soul, a glory gone,

Invested him with radiance dear,
And from him swelled an anthem clear
As that which heavenly harpers hear.

Ah, melody of moulder'd tongues,
For which the hopeless spirit longs
Ah, sweetness of forgotten songs,
The music that to death belongs.

THE CHAMBERED PYRAMID.

Still chants the Nile his funeral hymn,
For those who walked the river's brim,
In ages cold, lone, old and dim.

Still the south wind, on murmurous wings
Monotonous, the requiem sings
For twenty dynasties of kings.

The Battle of Gettysburg

I stood between the golden Nile,
And that bereaved and barren pile,
That lifts its wedge—a rocky isle,

A stony mountain reared with hands,
Begirt with surge of rippling sands,
Worn by the dust of Libyan lands.

Voiceless, I watched the mass of stone,
That stood so vast and seemed so lone,
A monarch's tomb, a history's throne.

A thought through all my being ran,
And lit, like fire, the spirit wan:
"How like a Pyramid is man."

Around Kephrenes' mountain-grave
Recurrent storms of battle rave,
King, Cæsar, sultan, knight and slave.

Yet sharp, the pyramid uprears
Its lines above the tide of spears,
Unworn by times, unwet by tears.

So with the man pyramidal;
Though round him stars in ruin fall,
Hope's Iris-arch transcends them all.

From out the sable depths divine
Of planet, constellation, sign,
And nebula,—the old fires shine,

Around the pyramidal pole:
And thus, around the human soul,
Mysterious planets flash and roll;

Immortal suns and systems glow,
Lights flash from worlds above, below,
On souls that come, and souls that go.

Within the pyramid's secret room,
Secure from battle and simoom,
The cere-cloth'd Pharaohs lay in gloom.

And so, in every earth-born breast,
A thousand hopes, in mourning drest,
Have found successive, hopeless rest.

Embalm'd but not the less entomb'd;
Sometimes by Memory's hand perfumed,
Sometimes by Glory's gilt and plumed,
Sometimes by wild Despair exhumed,
But ne'er with light of life illumed.

TIME THE ICONOCLAST.

Remember thee? And thou wast beautiful;
But that, O that was forty years ago;
As I remember when the last moon, full,
Made creamy silver every ridge of snow.

I mind the blossom-lips that could beguile
With bright girl-innocence, the summer hours;
I mind me of the sweet, alluring smile,
That played there, as the bee on passion-flowers.

Ah, beauty, sweetness, love, how they compel
The eye when present, memory when past:
Is it so long since I bade thee farewell,
And all that sweetness vanished in the vast?

The Battle of Gettysburg

I watch not all the changes of the moon,
I know not the precession of the sun;
But I know he will climb the heights of noon,
And she will silver-veil the mountains dun.

Some things are gone, and may to us return,
And these may haunt us with a hopeful pain.
Some things are gone—like ashes to the urn,
Doom'd not on earth to live and love again.

For thou hast found the dismal heritage
With which the world doth all the wise endow;
And suffered from the shut, volcanic rage
That grinds the heart, and bends the back and brow.

Imperial purple robes the distant crag,
And evening rims that purple with its gold—
The daylight climber finds but weary slag,
And wither'd forest, thunder-smit of old.

The whirling atoms man may drive or change,
But never one of these may he destroy;
In varied forms the universe they range,
To one brain sorrow, to another joy.

No atom perishes—but beauty dies;
And thy lost beauty, now annihilate,
Never again, in any world, can rise,
Nor shine, at any astronomic date.

Time, Time wears down the granite pyramid,
The lordly nation sinks into a slave;
Death presses down the brazen coffin-lid,
And leaves autumnal rattle on the grave.

and Other Poems

How, then, should human beauty challenge Time?
How shall the bloom abide upon the flowers?
Has Phidias or Raphael 'scaped the grime?
Not all thy loveliness could balk the Hours.

I saw thee last, in those enchanted years,
Thy golden beauty in the fields alone;
I find thee now, with eyes that have no tears,
Sad, hard Persephone, upon a throne.

VALE—VALE—VALE.

How chills my heart beneath the snows
That fall upon thy tomb;
And vain for me the graveyard rose
Expend its honeyed bloom;
No star in God's horizon glows,
Can light the loveless gloom.

Farewell, farewell, my love, my love,
A thousand times—Farewell!
My blinded heart must onward move,
And stumble toward thy cell—
This life, debarred from thee, shall prove
A shattered, songless shell.

Ye stars that o'er the wrecks of earth
Far-seeing vigil keep,
Beholding chance, time, love, war, birth,
Death, labor, longing, sleep—
Say, are the angels moved to mirth,
Or do the angels weep?

MINOR CHORDS

THE WORLD-PAIN.

"Numberless ages ran,
Of old, or ever thou didst reach the dawn,
And ages numberless, in death withdrawn,
Are waiting for thee, man."

—*From Leonidas of Tarentum, Prof. Phillimore's translation.*

To thine unfathomable eyes,
What means that fleeting form,
Hovering between the abyss and skies,
The man—the thing—the worm.

Maternal anguish yields its breath
That man may live and be;
The coral millions sink beneath,
That palms may crown the sea.

Ages, foreshorten'd to a span,
Have writ, on shores and seas,
The brief biography of man,
Between the eternities.

The stars that diadem the throne,
Sang, when the world began;
Would they have sung, if they had known
The deep, dark heart of man?

Who counts the rain-drops of the earth,
May count her mist of tears;
He hears the heart-beats, who hath heard
The chiming of the spheres.

The 'bubbling groan' of those submerged
May find an echo far,
With all the fiery lines converged,
From each unspoken star.

The Battle of Gettysburg

For, like the long-transmitted wave,
O'er myriad miles of foam,
The pain that vibrates in the slave
To God himself must come.

O still Spectator of the earth,
And her dull tragedy,
The while she travails with the birth
Of that new world to be:

The mystery of the laboring earth
Isaiah's heart hath worn:
"The children come unto the birth,
Without strength to be born."

To thee the whole creation groans,
Its ancient curse to tell;
Canst thou endure the ceaseless groans,
Of sin, and death, and hell?

The vastness of the universe,
Its silence, cold and drear,
Weigh on the heart, a formless curse,
Out of the ancient Fear.

What curse Memnonian from eld,
Hath silenced Music's tone?
What Gorgon-doom hath man beheld,
That turns his love to stone?

What bell, along the dismal path,
At every crossway, tolls?
What dark Attainder, like a wraith,
Must dog the track of souls?

Ye search the deep, ye search the skies,
Ye search primeval years,
And still the old worn man-heart cries,
And breaks, for want of tears.

THE VALLEY.

Is there a valley that lieth alone,
And away from the millions of men;
Beyond the mountain's desolate cone
And beyond the robber's den?

I did not say that this valley was green,
Or that men would call it fair;
But it makes us think of a world unseen,
And the shadow of peace is there.

Not shining its sides; they are dim and dun,
And it hath no glimpse of the sea;
Nor glad procession of waters that run,
By day and by dark, with melody.

But down in its hollow there lieth a lake,
Scarce knowing the sun's face old;
Dark beasts and songless birds go slake
Their thirst in its waters cold.

The trees are tall, and dark, and grand,
They are green the wide year through;
Around the lake like pillars they stand,
But the flowers are none, or few.

The Battle of Gettysburg

On the east shore stand the ranks of sedge,
And bend to the quiet wave;
And the cliff springs sheer from the western
edge,
Like the stone from a lonely grave.

Behold the place where the rock-dews drip,
Like tears from the long ago;
Adown the crag's old face they slip,
To be lost in the flood below.

The strange, still forest an avenue hath,
That leads to its column-cell;
But alas, who walks on that sombre path,
There is none so wise to tell.

This is the valley beyond the slope,
With a cold beam in the air,
And the trine farewell of a parting hope
Is the only voice that is there.

SUCCESSION.

The stork, the swallow, and the swan,
Those pilgrims of the sky,
Know when the winter, dim and wan,
Faints at the south wind's sigh.

They know Hyperion's northward march,
O'er sea and continent;
Who week by week, a grander arch
Builds on the firmament.

More numerous the winged hours
Attend the sun by day;
And as the birds move northward, flowers
Spring up behind their way.

So hath it been, ere Egypt's kings,
In periods old and lone,
Nor once hath failed the flight of wings
To seek the sunward zone.

Go, like the man of Patmos, stand,
By spindrift fierce and spray,
And watch the surf invade the land,
Again, again, alway.

The bastions of the Saguenay
Gloom'd in the stream below,
Their image bides, the floods away,
For ever silent, flow.

What spring-time, since the dawn of earth.
Hath failed the hills to preen,
And led the mountain-dance of mirth,
In robes of changeful green?

And never one October came
To hillsides of the north,
But maples blushed in farewell flame,
To speed the summer forth.

The leaves, in April's glory born,
Must in November die;
The rains must weep, the winds must mourn,
That pass the gaunt woods by.

The Battle of Gettysburg

And those who come are those who go,
And none may come again;
Systole and diastole, ebb and flow,
The rhythm and the refrain.

A moment in the Infinite,
A point within the Vast;
Removed by what unmeasured flight
From future and from past?

REPRESSION.

The bud that hath never full blossomed;
The face that was never caressed;
The love, like a dark lake, embosomed
In a soul that was never expressed:

When the seal of the heart is unbroken,
And its music hath never been sung,
No voice from its deep hath been spoken,
In a myriad words of the tongue.

O Sphinx, hadst thou e'er an enigma
So sorely our wonder to move,
As the pilgrim that carried the stigma
Of hate, and was found dead of love?

The sob and the pant for expression
Never won to the beautiful hour;
Were choked by the grip of repression,
Like the princelings that died in the tower.

As the highlander, sick in the lowland,
Sighs out to the mountains his breath,—
As the Paladin blast of a Roland,
That could utter itself but in death.

O the spirits whose silence is tragic;
Too sunk in their sorrow to weep;
As the palmy isles, lonely, pelagic,
Are whelmed by a heave of the deep.

Did ye know of the music that slumbered
For an age in the breast of the swan;
How it woke into song unencumbered,
When his glorious wing-sweep was gone?

And then, as the weak pinion fluttered,
He sank on the waters of rest,
And, pouring his life out, he uttered
The song he had kept in his breast.

When the urns of Manasseh were broken,
The torches of Israel could shine,
Whose sudden outflash was the token,
How near was the triumph divine.

MEMORY FAITHFUL TO SORROW.

Shall this heart from its woe be parted never,
As mountains changeless shade the flowing river;
The soul to mournful memory be wed,
As once was chained the living to the dead?

The Battle of Gettysburg

O wizard memory, let thy wand recall
The shade of years, as Samuel rose to Saul;
Or, yet more potent than Mercurial wand,
Evoke the pale, phantasmagorial band

Before the mind's dilated eye to march,
Like constellations o'er the ebon arch;
When night doth quench the sun, and occupy
With primal dark, the temple of the sky.

My ship, with silver sails and golden sides,
That drifted down the pearly-shining tides—
With inward eyes I saw that blessed ship
Like gleaming cloud in grey horizon dip.

And now, a lucent trembling of the sea
Is all my parted ship has left to me;
Till night rolls darkness o'er the shuddering main,
And other darkness folds my heart again.

Bright faces, waving hands, that thronged the deck,
Tell, have ye sailed to harbor or to wreck?
Ye eyes, that shone with expectation grand,
Say, have ye found the undecaying land?

Can ye not send a white-wing'd carrier-dove,
Some gentle courier from the land of love,
To tell that ye have trod that holy shore,
Where love's sweet children will lament no more?

No wind from any heaven will bring again
My ship that vanished o'er the glimmering main;
No sun that glorifies a vernal dawn
May gild her wake, a path of splendor drawn.

Ten thousand sail may come from hundred lands,
With glad hurrahs, and beckoning of brave hands;
But there's a silence in the midst of sound,
A light in all their lights that is not found.

Hath love no cry to sound beyond the foam;
No cry to bring the banish'd darlings home?
No fiat, to make light transpierce the gloom,
No voice imperial, to unsay the doom?

Down the long passes of the Pyrenees,
The blast of Roland, like the voice of seas,
Told Roncesvalles' fight to Charlemain,
A trumpet mourning o'er a field of slain.

Tremendous clarion: fill'd with hero's breath,
Couldst thou not shake the iron throne of death?
A thousand vibrant hills took up thy strain,
And all, no power to stir the mighty slain?

The voice of Roland, far down many a hill
Rebounding, after Roland's heart was still—
The heart of man, yet quivering as of yore,
When love has passed, and will come back no more.

The pines still wailing, from the gust o'erblown,
The harp yet vibrant, though the harper's gone;
The soul, yet thrill'd with love's remember'd strain,
When love is dead, and will not live again.

Must not the tower, or campanile, rock,
Though past is earth's profounder shock?
Will not the Titan tidal wave roll on,
To dash its vengeance on an alien zone?

TO THE MEMORY OF EDGAR ALLAN POE.

1909.

As the song of the sea-shell, afar from the shore,
May be heard in a mystical glen,
So thy music, heard once, may be heard evermore :
Now in age, I have turned to thy harping again,
To be lulled by thy music, as then.

Thy voice never was like the voice of the sea,
Nor the hammer of thunder was thine ;
But thy music made think what an angel's might be ;
Like the purest of zephyrs in branches of pine,
When the echoing heart can divine.

But the pollen was reft from a blossom so rare,
(Let us mourn for the beautiful slain)
And the worm at the heart of a fruitage so fair,
How it darkens the glory with pitiful stain,
Till the sweetness and beauty are vain.

There was gloom on thy soul, but the genius how
bright
As it flashed in thy sorrowful eye ;
As the stars that are argent on sable of night,
Or after the sunset, are ermined on high,
On a velvet and violet sky.

Out of space, out of time, thou has swept us away
In a music that wafted the soul,
O'er the walls of the night, thro' the gates of the
day
Beyond where the heavens their luminous scroll,
The emblazon of ages, unroll.

DEATH AND FAITH

TO A NEW SINGER IN HEAVEN'S CHOIR.

Away to that high land where angels are,
In myriad armies, marshal'd at the throne,
Thy soul hath sped the unseen highway lone,
Attracted hence by glory weightier far;
Too weak the ravel'd cords of earth and time
To hold life's palpitating, eager car;
Let go, toward God it gravitates sublime,
Unhinder'd, more than is the morning star
From rising, by the mountain's sable bar.

Wife, daughter, sister, mother,—dead; how still, O
How still thy face, on that September day,
When, with all reverence and love, they lay
Thy gracious head upon its painless pillow.
Safe hide, dear head, Amen: ordain'd no more
To bow beneath the rude and bursting billow
Of that dark sea that sweeps our crumbling
shore;
Rest till He call thee from beneath the willow,
Thy Bridegroom fair, the Man that is God's Fellow.

The trumpet-words of God, the clarion-psalm,
By this we answered the hoarse call of Death;
This was the challenge of unconquer'd faith;
O'er thy dear dust we brooked no coward qualm,
As if we yielded thee to death forever.
Shake, hearts, but break not; wrestling souls, be
calm;
Across that sea the Lamb's own light shall quiver,
Across that grave God breathes memorial balm,
And o'er death's cypress towers the resurrection-
palm.

The Battle of Gettysburg

O, voice on earth, melodious, rich and strong,
To sing the glories of the sinner's Friend:
O singer, when the myriad chords shall blend,
Of saints' and angels' panegyric throng—
That voice again to hear, more strong, more
sweet,

In fountains new of clear and gushing song:
Springing to Him, in whom all glories meet,
To whom all harmonies and hymns belong—
A music new to thee—Abel hath known it long.

Thine anguish, such as might make heroes blench,
Yet could not break a heart so stay'd on heaven;
Thine eyes, like stars that shine through vapors
driven,
Pain dimmed their light, their love it could not
quench;

Seldom thy voice, but oft the quivering feature,
Betrayed to guardian eyes the vital wrench.

We saw the wrestling of expiring nature,
While wrinkled pain still plowed a deeper trench,
And death secured his unrelaxing clench.

Greet her, ye spirits of the perfect just;
One more heart added to the charms of heaven.
Deep-wash'd, perfumed of God, and full-for-
given,

There not untimely nor unfitly thrust,
But meet for heritage of saints in light,
She hath but gone where God's love said she must.
Her soul, a traveling Shekinah bright,
Leaving its low pavilion in the dust,
Shall tabernacle there, where is nor moth nor rust.

The fallen gem, new-set beside its peers;
The Pleiad lost, returning to her rest;
The stray child, home-led to a mother's breast;

and Other Poems

The warrior-host, from death reclaim'd with cheers;
The son forlorn, rewarm'd at father's hearth;
Lo, these have music in terrestrial years:
Thou too, dear heart,—a soul redeem'd from
earth,
And from the dimness past of time and tears,
Art hailed by all the blest,—while Jesus smiles and
hears.

THE FLIGHT OF THE GOLDEN WINGS.

The lamentations of the gray-head sea,
With groaning and monotonous voice of yore,
Wailing the troublous changes of the shore:
As if from ultimate far lands to me
His myriad waters sweep—I hear them roll,
Like tones of unregarded prophecy;
That outer deep that calleth, O my soul,
Thou inner deep, interpret: Whither flee
The vanish'd wings that folded once o'er thee?

Ye bright wings, whither fled? Say, are ye tost
From wave to insurmountable dark wave,
Waste howling wilderness of seas that lave
What shores we know not;—or on what dire coast,
Black, boundless, horrible, say, are ye dashed
And dimmed, your brightness and your beauty lost
Where sun-glow on the chaos never flashed;
A ray of gold by rayless darkness crost,
A gem, upon death's sable shield embost?

The ocean-anvil, smit by the hammering blast,
White-hissing, hot, is spread to sheeted foam:
Poor banish'd land-bird, and is this thy home?

The Battle of Gettysburg

These desert waters, dread, and vex'd, and vast—
Beats thy weak wing above so wild abyss,
From earthly love, and home, and shore outcast?
Frail, arkless dove, is there no end but this?
No storm-fast isle, no crag, no lonely mast,
To stay the winged soul, on death's wide sea aghast?

It needs not; for on wings more swift than light,
Right through that storm—right through its
wrack and roar,
Our bird hath gained the unseen, stormless shore;
There preens her wings, beyond the zone of night,
There shines and sings, a bird of Paradise.
No land this side of heaven could stay her flight,
No night, no storm could hide God from her
eyes;
Translated, beautiful amid the bright,
A glory and a song among the saints in light.

THE OLDEST MYSTERY.

Riddle of earth and man, what are thou, Death?
The grim memorial of ancestral crime;
Life's disappointment in her tryst with Time;
The painful farewell between dust and breath;
Most dread negation—Love's supreme farewell,
Which thrice (in pain and maze and shame she
saith)
Evokes no answer from the abandon'd shell;
The soul, a sword lost from a mold'ring sheath;
The soul, a perish'd bloom; the clay, a withering
wreath.

O silent shell upon a voiceful strand,
Throbbing no more with murmurs of the wave,
Vainly we peer within thy tinted cave,
Seeking a tenant fled: Some holier land
Hath made eterne the music lost in time;
Where crystal sea is edged with golden sand;
Where is no sound untuned to love's sweet
rhyme,
Song of the Lamb is there, than earth's more grand;
Fairer pavilion too, for mightier music plann'd.

Tremendous silence of the dust inurn'd:
The orphan's ear is pressed upon the grass,
The trampling generations come and pass,
Nor is one echo from the tomb returned;
Darkness of death is voiceless as that light
Auroral, 'mid the northern stars that burned,
The cold fire kindled in the Arctic night,
Whose ghostly glamour hath the Bear interned.
O Love, though dead, art thou so unconcerned?

Sarpedon pierced, to Lycian mountains borne,
Alcestis, one foot on the sable prore,
One hand outstretch'd to the unlighted shore,
Demeter, of her vanish'd child forlorn;
Or those who in far quest, have sailed beyond
The goal of even or the gates of morn,
In search of golden fleece or golden frond,
Or fount of youth; hands weak, but hearts unworn,
Yonside the fiery cape, or Capricorn.

Dear fables all: for no Icarian wing
Above the gulf can hold or king or clown;
From life's empyrean fluttering wingless down—
No, not the Orphean voice, the Delian string,
The daedal skill, can draw to earth again.

The Battle of Gettysburg

The rising eagle, by the serpent's sting
Pierced sinks, but not more surely, to the plain;
See writhing death to the vast pinions cling;
So withers love in coils of that dread Thing.

No—thou art sweet evangel, buried love;
And the far echo of thy silenced song,
Which vibrates in the mourner's heart so long,
Gives him to know what science ne'er shall prove.
From th' overwhelming and abysmal sea,
'Tis not the owl or raven, but the dove
Brings green-leav'd hope of immortality,
And that Immutability above,
To which the mutable may sweetly move.

Down each proud avenue to the narrow home,
Old Karnak's cipher'd and tremendous gate,
Or where the Carian monarch lay in state;
Where Hadrian's pile confronts eternal Rome,
Or Goth's black tomb beneath Busento's stream,
Or Raphael's urn beneath the Pantheon-dome;
Where stained lights on marble coffins gleam;
In cave, or crypt, or cool congenial loam,
His word will pierce, and all the dead shall come.

IN DROMORE CHURCHYARD.

Lone barrows, roll'd in billowing grass,
Green Ireland's green, an emerald mass,
Proclaim: "Our dead are here."
As they were dear, and strong, and brave,
So let their sweet remembrance crave
A mist of tears around their grave,
For love must not grow sere.

and Other Poems

The mysteries of time and space
Oppress this mortuary place,
This shadowy, silent spot.
For, here we reach the mortal shore,
And fain would pass the barrier o'er,
We gaze, and dream, and can no more;
They were—and are they not?

The lips that utter no more word,
The heavens that speak, and are not heard,
Silence above, beneath;
And stranger from far land am I,
Who stand between that dreaming sky,
Between the clouds that loiter by,
And these thy chambers, Death.

A silence in the heavens o'erhead,
A silence of the weary dead,
A silence in the soul;
For, living lips, they dare not speak,
The lips of dust, they will not wake,
And God will not the silence break,
Until the trumpet roll.

As unknown constellations rise
For him who sails to southern skies,
What day he nears the line;
The old familiar heavens are strange,
But vast and beautiful the change,
Where new stars in new heavens range,
And with new lustre shine.

So, death transfigures all the scene.
The headstones, sunk in changeless green,
The little church of stone;

The Battle of Gettysburg

Transfigures e'en the sky above,
While memory, the murmuring dove,
Goes forth in search of perish'd love,
That's now immortal grown.

Like sombre wraiths of restless dead
The clouds upon Sliebh Gallion's head
In silence come or go ;
Silent, they rise on ocean-plain,
In silence traverse land or main,
Then leave the mountain lone again,
As in the long ago.

Knowest thou the balancings of clouds,
Accumulate in shining crowds,
Behind the fleeing storm?
And when that welcome storm hath marched
Above the fields and furrows parched,
Then, seven-fold bow, in splendor arched,
Doth gloom to glow transform.

The goings-out of morn and even,
The bright'ning and the dark'ning heaven,
Have beauty transitory ;
But when He comes, sublime in cloud,
His dead, from sepulchre and shroud,
Greet Him with hallelujahs loud,
And with him march to glory.

AFTER MANY DAYS.

Under grey skies thou goest forth with weeping,
Thou shalt not see the Autumn's golden haze ;
Thy sowing shall become another's reaping,
Yes, after many days.

and Other Poems

Go, cast thy bread upon the fleeting waters,
And listen not for mortal lips to praise;
Ask not whose sons shall eat it, nor whose daughters,
Ask not—for many days.

Nor sit beside the river broken-hearted,
But o'er God's ocean stretch thy fearless gaze;
It shall not come in tears, as it departed,
After the many days.

Distrust not; haste not; faint not; wait the sequel;
We see but atoms of His mighty ways;
The sower and the reaper shall be equal,
At the far end of days.

Thine alabaster-box of precious ointment,
If broken for a suffering Savior's praise,
Fear not, will prove no final disappointment,
Though there be many days.

"How long, O Lord," they cry beneath the altar,
"Thy vengeance for our suffering still delays?"
But with the white robe God says: "Wait, nor falter,
Though it seem many days."

Slow ages o'er the martyrs' dust are creeping,
But their high witness never more decays;
Now, harvest-home resounds above their sleeping,
After these many days.

Like him in Dothan, lo, thine eyes are holden,
Thou dost not see God's angel-chariots blaze;
But far, where Jesus is, the skies are golden
Beyond the end of days.

The Battle of Gettysburg

God's autumn comes; say not meanwhile, thou
starvest;

Behold, like cedar'd Lebanon it sways;
God, thine own God, hath set for thee a harvest,
Ripe—at the end of days.

TO K. M. M.

I saw thee pass beneath the bower,
Arrayed in bridal bloom;
Who could have known how swift the hour
That robed thee like the tomb?

'Twas but a sunset glory there,
An evanescent glow,
That faded on the western air,
And left thee dark below.

The torch of life, so soon revers'd
Hath shed its farewell ray;
The noble form, so early hears'd,
Hath gone the shadow'd way.

Yet never death shall vanquish love,
Tho' life between them fled;
The heart still lights her lamp, above
The ashes of the dead.

Eternity is near to Time,
And Time speeds in its groove,
A moment from the earthly chime
To that high song above.

'Twas bloom and beauty of the bride,
 'Tis now the widow's tears;
'Twas manhood, glowing at thy side,
And now—the silent years.

He stood beside thee, glad to bow
 And plight the holy word;
A little while with thee—but now,
 For ever with the Lord.

SATIRE

WANTED—A PASTOR

[for a fashionable church].

If the reader detect some echoes of other men in this satire, let him bear with it. My wish was rather to point a moral than to adorn a tale; so, like Samson, I chose the weapon that came handiest, not thinking at all of the previous owner thereof.

“A hero,” said Lord Byron, “that’s my want.”
But heroes are not that for which we pant.
We seek a man, sing it aloud, O muse,
To fill the pulpit and to fill the pews.
Tourists, convoy’d by Cook, may journey round
The globe, to Palestine from Puget Sound;
From Bab-el-Mandeb’s Melancholy Gate,
To where the rorqual blows in Behring’s Strait;
From palms of Florida and tepid foam,
Far to the golden Chersonese of Nome;
And where the Klondike, with auriferous dirt,
Invites the booted miner in red shirt;
Or those columnar posts of Herakles
Divide the ancient from the modern seas;
View ups and downs of life, from Bushman’s
 kraal,
To mirror’d splendors of the Taj Mahal.
And, when you face our custom-house again,
We’ll search your clothes and seven trunks in vain.
Fine things and wondrous sights you may have
 found,
But not a man, to till this holy ground.

Diogenes, thou lord of bitter jest,
Forsake thy rent-free tub, and aid our quest.
Change thy poor lanthorn for electric light,

The Battle of Gettysburg

And search the nations for an honest wight.
'Tis safe to say, in prose or numerous verse,
The thing we're looking for is unco' scarce.
Tell us, grim Cynic, has thou found the man
Who will fill out our well-considered plan?
The man *we* want, that is to say, for he
Must be a paragon from A to Z.
For look, we make thee sure, Athenian frēeman,
'Tis not *a* man that we would have, but *the* man.

Alas, to mention all the faults—egregious—
Which he must *not* have, it would be too tedious;
"*Tempus deficeret*"—it looks best in Latin,
As meagre necks are well set off by satin.

He must be sensible, not sensitive;
Must take a thousand pin-pricks, never give.
His stomach must be tough as a hen's gizzard,
Digesting all affronts, from A to Izzard.
In some things, like th' ornithorhynchus,
(Don't call our boat by such a name; 'twould sink
us)

Be like the ducks and the amphibians too;
He must not lie, not yet tell all that's true.

He must not be an obstinate man, for then
He'd be unfit to deal with obstinate men;
Men who, with blind, unreasoning impact,
Will dash against a clear and shining fact,
As, on dark, stormy nights, it comes to pass,
Birds dash themselves against the lighthouse glass,
He must not shun a laugh with common folks,
Yet ne'er descending to unseemly jokes;
A tale to swap, like Lincoln, long of joint,
But ne'er like Lincoln's, with too sharp a point.
If to the ladies 'twas not fit to tell,
Grant thought it was unfit for men as well.

He must be elegant, but not too fine;

and Other Poems

He must not "get his dinner," but must "dine."

He must not be old-fashioned; this we press;
Old-fashioned or in doctrine, or in dress;
Tho' he may labor, worthy of his hire,
Yet he'll not do, unless he suits the choir.
'Tis not the "choir invisible" by far,
But much in evidence; who think they are,
When fussing with their quavering flats and sharps,
Sweet as the harpers, harping with their harps.

And we must eke consider, by the way,
Those who are swift to giggle, slow to pray.
To please these ruling classes, he must be
A man both sweet to hear, and fair to see.

There is, 'tween sight and sound a brain-deep
nexus,
As Maine, tho' seeming far, is near to Texas.

I am as quick to quote from Cicero,
As mothers are at night, to kiss a row
Of tously heads beneath the counterpane:
"All arts, which to humanity pertain,
Are bound together by a common tie,
And, as it were, joined by affinity."
So then, the rainbow in the firmament
May be with chords of Bach or Mozart blent.
The Parthenon—or Milan's marble wonder,
May find its echo in the tropic thunder;
And if you can't see Raphael's Madonnas,
It's much the same to hear the prima donnas.
The tap'stry of Kashgar or Samarcand
Will match the music of piano grand;
And Sinim's carved ivory, deft and sharp,
May stir your musings like Æolian harp.
There is a story of a poor blind varlet,
Was asked: "What think you of the color scarlet?"

The Battle of Gettysburg

He said: "'Tis like the blast upon a trumpet."
If you like not this rhyme, why, you must—
(Here's a *lacuna* in the manuscript,
Where the pup chewed, or, hap, dull scissors clipt)
The blind man's answer shows that sight and sound
Have somewhere, in the brain, a common ground,
So, when we seek an epithet quite handy,
To pin a label on a too-bold dandy,
To differentiate him from well-dress'd crowd,
We need but say: "His clothes are very loud."

To make my meaning plain, by fit example,
Now, there's Miss Waugh Ter Million—she's a
sample.

Her garments sound like sunsets; or, at least, her
Dress and her head-dress shine aloud at Easter;
And when I see her, walking up the aisle,
If I were not right reverent—I should smile.
Yes, eyes, as many as on peacock's tail,
Watch for her up the middle aisle to sail,
With splendid steerage of the silken trail.
Perhaps, stern reader, with your logic stark,
You'll rise to point of order, and remark:
"Dear sir, I know things are not what they seem,
But what's all this to do with your high theme?
You surely could get on a little faster,
And tell the marks by which you choose a pastor."
Well, churches are as changeful as the seasons,
And sometimes choose their pastors for poor
reasons.

The timely neighing of Hytaspes' horse
Was once permitted a king-maker's force,
And served to guide the Persian Empire's course.

If we, like Adam, went in undressed pelts,
Cloth'd in our innocence, and little else,
Why, then, a church's call would sure express

and Other Poems

Some better reason than the pastor's dress.
A man whom they could view with gratitude,
To see how graceful was his attitude.
Even when he uttered a mere platitude:
And when he finished, down he sat, a dude.
So, every pretty and conceited minx
Speaks, far more freely even than she thinks;
Sure of a welcome, in her blues and pinks,
Sure of her wisdom as the Theban sphinx;
She's thought to voice the preference of the young
And that's what counts, or be it said or sung—

There are, who fain would have their pastor trace
His lineage to some illustrious race;
Or that he come, at least, from some great place,
(Tho' biggest men from smallest towns may come,
As from Arpinum Tully came to Rome).
Or else, with nose in air, the scorner saith:
"Can any good thing come from Nazareth?"
For in church-goers, there are found some snobs,
Who may not have gold watches, but have fobs.
You're told that each hidalgo Andalusian
Thinks he's a scion of Boabdil—vain delusion!
It's notable how the most azure blood
Hath such a fixed affinity for—mud.
And you don't need to be porphyrogene,
To preach the gospel of the Nazarene.
Better the plainest man, in youth or age,
Than one who'd lord it o'er God's heritage.
To fill the scripture-office of a pastor,
A guide and friend you need, but not a master.
As, if we had to lead the life of frog,
We would prefer the reign of dull King Log,
To that long-tax-bill King, of drastic work—
That Edward Longshanks, King severe—the stork.

The Battle of Gettysburg

Whate'er ye do, be sure ye do not ask
Bombastes Furioso to the task;
Whose voice reverberates like basso-drummer,
He's like the storms you sometimes see in summer,
Where lightning hardly seems to match the thunder,
And sound and sense are each a cause of wonder,
In ways diverse. Now might you hear retold,
To illuminate our theme, a fable old:
The ass, who valor's medal sought to win,
Arrayed his baseness in the lion's skin.
The hide, indeed, shook horror all around,
But when he roared—'twas laughter met the sound.
Have we not seen the parson, in fine robes,
Quite awesome; but who smote our aural lobes,
With pompous style and sounds cacophonous,
Which did not make his thoughts diaphanous;
And some coarse men were even heard to say,
That he who came to preach remained to bray.
Mistaken man! who thinks that he can call
This earthly ball with his unearthly bawl.
The farmer thought it but a sorry joke,
When urged to purchase of a pig in poke;
You must not judge Achilles by his heel,
Nor dog by bark, nor even pig by squeal;
And they must be uncommon fond of noise,
Who choose a pastor chiefly for his voice.

Beware the man who thinks that he is wise
To simplify the ancient mysteries,
When mightiest minds of earth have failed to solve,
He thinks th' unriddling must on him devolve.
(A bat, half-blind, and flitting here and there
Among the granite doctrines, without care)
His wisdom is so fresh that it is raw,

And what these mighty minds have held in awe,
He thinks to settle with few wags of jaw.
The doctrines that have stood the test of Time,
This man, with little reason, and less rhyme,
Would lightly hurl into Oblivion's grime.
Judged by himself, a giant-killer he;
But listen somewhat carefully, you'll see,
That while he seems an awful sword to draw,
The giants that he slays are men of straw.
His boastings move the sinful world to jeer,
The wise to anger, and the meek to fear.

The Greek proclaimed, to quell the camp's alarms,
"Who hath let loose the ass among the arms?"
And laughter well may cause your ribs to crack, as
You hunt the lion and you catch the jackass.

If there's a place from which, in all the world,
The salary-seeker should be promptly hurled
(Since dirt is "only matter in wrong place")
The money-lover should fill other space—
When he takes on himself to speak instead
Of Him, who had not where to lay his head.
A man of Tarsus claimed, and it was true:
"Corinthians, I seek not yours, but you."
But these will surely get what most they seek,
Collecting it from Scythian, Jew, or Greek.
One text they can expound, with force and fire,
"The laborer is worthy of his hire."
But listen sharply, and you'll notice, neighbor,
The stress is on the hire, not on the labor.
He would be one of those, who each bore half
The cluster'd wealth of Esh-col on a staff.
When salary's paid, he is in Christian mood,
And thinks: "The gold of that there land is good."
His business method? That of New York shyster,
Whose client gets the shell, and he the oyster.

The Battle of Gettysburg

Hast found the man? He's worth his weight in gold;

Go, shout "Eureka," like the sage of old.

I bid thee not, like him, rush from the bath,

Arrayed but in the robe that nature hath.

Thou'st found what earth could yield not, nor the sea.

How happier in thy quest and trove than she,

Who ne'er on pillow laid a weary head,

Till she had sought the burglar 'neath the bed.

Her search rewarded, after many years,

Behind the valence the dread boot appears,

"Ex pede Herculem"; she knew that all

The rest was there, and uttered the sharp call.

The semi-somnous husband answered queer.

"Well, well; I'm glad at last you've found him, dear;

You've looked for him, 'tis now the twentieth year."

Now, as she judged the burglar by the boot,

Don't choose your pastor for a dapper foot.

It would be well in planning all these things

(Trying to splice together all the strings)

To spend some thought upon the lowly herd

Who want a minister to "preach the Word."

Your high falutin man they may admire,

But pyrotechnics are not sacred fire.

Talk, thin and watery, tho' very bright,

A fountain tinted with electric light,

And cold as is the Northern Dawn at night.

Hungry in soul, they leave the temple door,

From a poor sermon to a dinner poor.

You joke at them, because they're orthodox,

They ruminate, as patient as the ox.

Tho' they complain not much, they're dumbly conscious

and Other Poems

This meagre soup won't fill their moral paunches.
(That rhyme offends the purist; I admit it;
These dissyllabic rhymes can't always hit it.)

Nor is the matter better, if the preacher
Cannot fulfil the office of a teacher.
He cannot make his meaning plain and sure,
And, laboring to be deep, becomes obscure.
Just understand: No long time will men stand
Under the talk that they don't understand.

The feet most beautiful that earth have trod
Are his who stands upon our mouldering sod,
To tell to men the saving truth of God.
Who, learning the deep things of God, can tell
The things of heaven and the things of hell;
Can show the guilty soul how it may stand
Righteous as God himself, at God's right hand.
From ages and from generations old
This truth was veiled, but now is plainly told;
And, by the mandate of eternal God,
To all the dying nations sent abroad.
He who is called of God to this high task
Will need no robe, no cothurn and no mask.
With words as serious as the bell that tolls,
With prayer that cries, and heart that yearns for
souls,
To turn them to that Living Lord that bled,
He stands between the living and the dead.
So, with the word of Truth upon his lips,
Aims at the souls of men, and boldly grips
Their sluggish consciences to make them feel
It is with God Almighty they must deal.
A man whose guerdon is, the boon unpriced
To win the hearts of men for Jesus Christ.

The Battle of Gettysburg

Who, while the myriads comfortably sleep
Awakes to watch for souls, to pray or weep.
Blest church! were such a man to fill thy chair,
Tho' he were cloth'd in sackcloth and in hair.

[THE END.]

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